

# STUDIES

HONOURING THE CENTENNIAL OF  
UNIVERSITETETS ETNOGRAFISKE MUSEUM, OSLO  
1857—1957

Vol. I  
Gutorm Gjessing: Socio-Culture. Interdisciplinary  
Essays on Society and Culture.

Vol. II  
Fredrik Barth: Indus and Swat Kohistan  
an Ethnographic Survey.

OSLO 1956

FORENEDE TRYKKERIER

*Survey*

## INDUS AND SWAT KOHISTAN AN ETHNOGRAPHIC SURVEY

GN 635  
P3B37

BY  
FREDRIK BARTH

OSLO 1956

FORENEDE TRYKKERIER

The publication of this volume has been  
aided by a grant from  
Norges Almenvitenskapelige  
Forskningsråd.

## PREFACE

The following material was collected while the author was engaged in social anthropological field work among the Pathan (Pukhtun) tribes of Swat State and Malakand Agency, N.W.F.P., Pakistan. This work was supported by a grant from the Norwegian Research Council.

The Pathans of Swat represent the point of a north-eastward thrust of speakers of Iranian languages, and probably spread into the Swat area in successive waves between 800 and 1500 A. D. (Stein 1929). Swat State has, however, extended its control also over the territories of Indus and Swat Kohistan, inhabited by various distinct peoples, speaking languages of the Indian group and sometimes referred to as Dardic peoples (Linguistic Survey of India). Partly from an interest in the historical and ecologic relations between these two groups of peoples, partly because the Kohistan populations are tied to the Pathans of Swat through a political dual division into two grand alliances, which unite factions across the ethnic border, I embarked on a brief survey of the Kohistan peoples of Swat State.

The following pages summarize information gathered on a three week trip in July—August 1954 through the areas in question, preceded by exploratory interviews with a few Kohistani travellers and informed Pathans in Swat. I venture to publish this fragmentary and preliminary material only in view of the extreme lack of published ethnographic material from the area — to my knowledge limited to the summary treatment in Biddulph (1880), who did not himself visit the area. Sir Aurel Stein who, in 1941, was the



first European traveller to traverse Indus Kohistan gives (Stein 1942) geographical and historical information only. In that area, I partly followed his footsteps, and partly had the rare pleasure of being the first European to visit some valleys. From Swat Kohistan — more readily accessible and frequently visited by Westerners — ethnographic accounts are limited to Biddulph (1880) and occasional comments by Stein (1928, 1929).

My information was collected through formal interviews and informal conversations with a number of individuals in each area — predominantly locals, but also, where their administrative experience was particularly relevant, with the appointed officers of Swat State. In the brief time at my disposal, it was not always possible to control the information given — the following must thus be regarded as preliminary, to be superseded in the event of intensive field work in the area. Almost all information was collected directly from speakers of Pashto, the lingua franca of the area. Only in Patan was the general knowledge of this language limited enough to cause some inconvenience, and necessitate the use of an interpreter in one or two cases. My own knowledge of Pashto was at the time fair; but to eliminate all possibility of misunderstanding during the rapid collecting of material from a totally unfamiliar culture, I was assisted by Aurangzeb of Parona, at present a student of Peshawar University and a fluent English speaker.

My thanks go first of all to H. R. H. the Wali of Swat for offering me all facilities on this trip, and to His Chief Secretary, Ata Ullah Khan, for helping me in my preparations. Further, my thanks are due to all the Wali's appointed administrators, and among them most particularly to the Hakim Sahib of Patan, who invariably received me with the most gracious hospitality. In spite of the efforts of the Wali and his officials, however, travel through these areas must necessarily involve one in considerable discomforts and hardships; and I am indebted to Aurangzeb of Parona and Kashmiri, my servant, for their patient struggles in what they regarded as the most terrible of countries. For my own part, the magnificence of nature and glimpses into an extraordinary culture offered ample compensations for such discomforts as were inevitable.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	97
Area — communications — ethnic groups — route of travel — method of travel.	
KOHISTEI .....	15
Name — material culture — area — subdivisions — settlement pattern — history.	
Subsistence and economy .....	18
Agriculture — livestock — transhumance — grazing and herding — dairying — hunting and gathering.	
Division of labor .....	24
Tenants — craftsmen — Mians — trade — wealth.	
Political organization .....	28
Descent groups — land ownership — relevance to present distribution of lineages — territories — administrative bodies — religious leaders — factions — centrifugal and centripetal forces.	
Castes .....	40
Solution of conflicts .....	43
Customary law .....	44
Households, Relations between sexes .....	46
Rites de passage .....	48
Jag Pathans .....	49
Badshi .....	51
GAWRI .....	52
Economy .....	54
Agriculture — division of labor.	
Political organization .....	56
Descent groups — genealogies — land ownership — political alliances — village councils — centrifugal tendency — castes.	
Solution of conflicts .....	64
Rites de passage .....	66
Mythology .....	67

TORWALI .....	69
Economy .....	69
Political organization .....	69
Descent groups — administration .....	72
Solution of conflicts .....	75
Rites de passage .....	75
Gujars .....	76

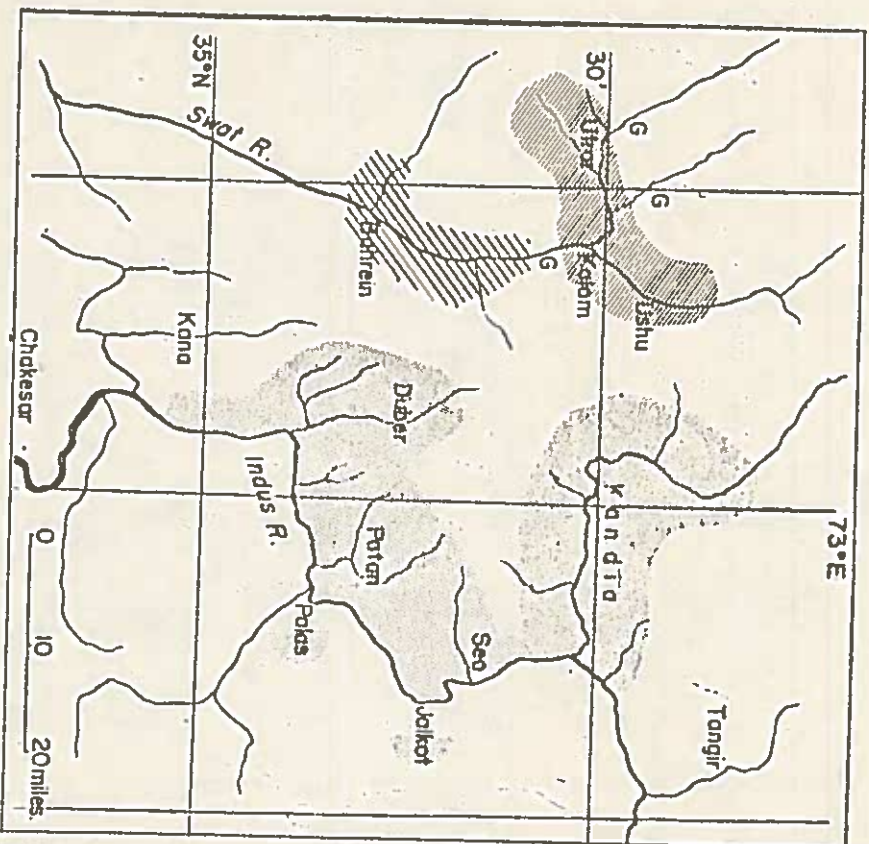
TRADITIONS OF CENTRALIZED STATES .....	79
CONCLUSION .....	87
APPENDIX I .....	94
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	97

Note on transcription in text:  
 consonant reduplication (tt, dd) = palatalization  
 accented vowel (â, î) = long vowel  
 â = long open a.



Map. I. — Northern Pakistan and India. Broken line — limits of area surveyed.  
 Dotted line — limits of Dardic languages.





Map. 11. Area surveyed.  
 close and open stipple — area occupied by Kohistani-speaking people, W. and E. dialect respectively  
 close diagonal hatching — area occupied by Gáwri-speaking people  
 open diagonal hatching — area occupied by Torwáli-speaking people  
 G — permanent Gujar settlements  
 unshaded areas — in part utilized as summer pastures by nomadic Gujars.

## INTRODUCTION

### AREA:

Swat and Indus Kohistan constitutes a broken and wild mountain area drained by the headwaters and upper tributaries of the Swat river, and divided by the Indus river from the great bend, where it turns from flowing north-westward and passes southward through a deep gorge, to where the mountains start receding from its banks as it enters Buner. These mountains are deeply cut by a number of short valleys, carrying tributary streams to the Indus and Swat rivers. The Indus drainage area is characterized by the greatest extremes in relief, from mountain peaks of 18—19 000 ft. to the bottom of the Indus gorge, at less than 3000 ft. altitude, and by valleys where sheer rock faces rise unbroken for several thousand feet. The valey bottom in Swat Kohistan descends from perhaps 8000 ft. altitude near the headwaters to 4000 ft. where it emerges from its gorge Bahrein, the southernmost Swat Kohistani village. Thus, though surrounded by mountains of equal height to those of Indus Kohistan, the relief is somewhat more moderate, and the valley is characterized in its upper parts by a broader, more U-shaped profile.

Kohistan is also characterized by extremes in temperature — from permanent snow and ice in the mountains and high passes to summer temperatures of 110° F. by the Indus, and with daily fluctuations in the high valleys in July—August from mid-day temperatures of near 100° F. to night frost. Precipitation is moderate, and falls mainly in the winter, as snow. The area lies on the very edge, with Northern Indus Kohistan entirely outside, of the monsoon



area of summer rain. Due to meltwater from the large snow reserves, streams and rivers are however flooded all summer. The lowlying areas around the Indus are characterized by scrub and thorn forests of *palosa* (a-thorny, flowering tree), while the rest of the area, up to ca. 10 000 ft. altitude, supports dense deodar and pine forests wherever the slope is not too steep. Above 10 000 ft., a few pine-trees, and occasional groves of birch, may be seen, though at such altitudes, up to the snowline (15—16 000 ft.) the scant earth is mostly covered by thick, short grass, moss, and innumerable flowers in the brief summer season.

#### COMMUNICATIONS:

Communications are problematical, especially in Indus Kohistan. Most transport is by foot, though a recently constructed path, carrying the traveller on «hanging galleries» along the foaming Indus, is passable by donkey or mule caravan up to Seo. Where the main river is not followed, or in travelling between Indus and Swat Kohistan, the critical passes range between 14 000 and 16 000 ft. in altitude, and are never free of snow.

Swat Kohistan may be reached and traversed more easily, either along the jeep road constructed by the Wali from the end of the motor road at Bahrein and nearly to Kalam, or across the low pass (ca. 11 000 ft.) connecting Kalam with the northern areas of Dir state. A very high pass, supposedly some 17 000 ft., connects Swat Kohistan with Chitral State to the North. It appears rarely to have been used.

#### ETHNIC GROUPS:

Indus and Swat Kohistan are inhabited by several distinct ethnic groups: the *Kohistani* proper of Indus Kohistan, subdivided into two dialect groups who disclaim any genetic relationship to each other; the *Gawri* in the north and the *Torwali* in the south of Swat Kohistan, these three all being what has been called Dardic (Linguistic Survey of India), i. e. old Indo-Aryan speaking peoples; *Pashto*-speaking people, ruled by members of saintly families, mainly in the southern parts of Indus Kohistan; and *Gujars*, some as

nomadic summer visitors, some in permanent settlements, speakers of Pashto or Gujri (a lowland Indian dialect), and mainly found in Swat Kohistan. Finally, two settlements of *Badesbi* are reported to exist in Chakesar just south of Indus Kohistan, presumably belonging to the Dardic group of peoples.

#### ROUTE OF TRAVEL:

In the survey of the above areas, I attempted to maximize mobility at the expense of comfort, and was able, thanks to the assistance given me by the State authorities, in this way to cover considerable territory. One may reach Karorra on the Ghorband-Kana valley junction by local bus from Saidu in the course of some hours. From there I followed the Ghorband stream down to the Indus at Bisham, in Pashto-speaking territory. My route from there followed the Indus and later the Duber stream to Duber Fort, all within the W. dialect group of Kohistani. From Duber, a footpath leads over a low pass to a series of small valleys, together forming the Jijal and Patan communities of speakers of the E. dialect of Kohistani. Rather than continue through the lower settlements along the Indus, which in the summer are nearly abandoned, I then followed the main Patan valley up into the heart of the Indus Kohistan mountains through the succession of seasonal settlements to the highest mountain passes, and on over the Tial (also called Munro) pass, at between 15 000 and 16 000 ft. altitude. This divide forms the border between the E. and W. dialect areas; crossing it and descending towards the Kandia valley bottom, I followed this moderately large tributary of the Indus upwards through a major part of its extent, to Gabrial. A side valley just below Gabrial leads up to the Matiltan pass, reaching some 15 000 ft. altitude, which constitutes the easiest route between the Kandia and Swat valleys. The divide corresponds to the border between Kohistani and Gawri territory. The Matiltan valley descends to the Gawri settlements of Matiltan and Ushu. Taking this route, I continued down the main valley to its point of juncture with Gabral river at Kalam, the central Gawri settlement. After visiting Utror, on the western tributary, I continued along the Swat river, through the Gujar communities Laikot and Peshmal, through the



section of the valley belonging to the Torwalis, finally reaching Bahrein, the southernmost Torwali village, and the northernmost point which is reached by motor communications.

#### METHOD OF TRAVEL.

As much of this route was impassable for donkeys, coolies were required for all transport. This area being deficient in food, supplies, (rice, flour, sugar, tea) for the group were carried. Coolies were changed between each district I passed through, and their number was reduced as the supplies were consumed — from four at the start to one on arrival in Bahrein. The administration kindly furnished us with an armed guard; of equipment, short of food, weapons, and purely personal effects, warm bedding as protection against the very low night temperatures was the only necessity.

The, in part, rather forced marches of the schedule would not have been possible to maintain in continuous travel. The days spent in communities at interviewing served, however, as rest periods, and enabled us to travel more swiftly when on march. Thanks to the friendliness of both Pathans and Kohistanis when one meets them on the road as fellow travellers, even the days of travel were not lost to anthropology. Some of my most useful assistance in grasping Kohistani political and social institutions was given by fellow travellers, coolies, and guards during the strenuous hours of companionship on a narrow or non-existent foot-path.

#### KOHISTEI

NAME: Kohistani or Kohistai.

Kohistani is a general term in the Pashto language for the non-Pathan inhabitants of outlying, mountainous areas. For the group in question I was however unable to discover any other name. The term Mayan or Mayr, applied to the inhabitants by Biddulph (1880) and the Linguistic Survey of India, did not seem locally familiar. Similarly, the name Killiwal, occasionally given to them (e. g. Hay 1934) is not a proper ethnic name, meaning merely villager, i. e. in contrast to nomads and strangers. All informants insisted that Kohistani, in their own language Kohistai, was the proper name of the group. Alternatively, the name of the district is used as an ethnic appellation, e. g. Duberwal, Parawal — that is man from Duber, Patan.

#### MATERIAL CULTURE

*Houses* are constructed from wood and rock. The walls are made mainly of rock with occasional horizontal beams embedded in the rubble. A flat roof — plastered with mud in the winter dwellings, made only as a laticework of branches and twigs, with the leaves on them, in the summer camp sites — is supported by the upright walls and by one or several transverse beams; the beams are supported by pillars. Such pillars are generally carved, in the case of mosques, very elaborately.

*Clothing*: The fashion is rapidly changing in favor of Pathan style. The traditional dress for men consists of (1) a woolen blanket, carried over the shoulder or wrapped around the body and arms

as protection against the cold, (2) baggy pants of heavy material, (3) footwear consisting of badly cured goat or calf-skins, wrapped around the leg and foot held in place with rope or leather thongs. The color of clothes are usually dull and undistinguished. The main modification taking place is the adoption of the Pathan style tunic/shirt, and vest.

Women are dressed in baggy pants under a very long tunic, reaching to the knees. The sleeves and breast of the tunic may be decorated with silver and shell sequins, and silver or tin edging is hammered onto the hem of the skirt. A great amount of jewellery is worn on head, wrists, and especially around the neck. On top, a large piece of cloth is thrown over the shoulders and used by women above puberty to cover the body completely on the approach of a man. Most women are dressed in black.

The men frequently shave their heads, and wear a moderately short, full beard. Racially, they are readily distinguished from Pathans by their darker skin, less robust build, and general similarity to lowland Indians.

*Weapons:* Guns — from a variety of sources, ranging from ancient products of Pathan home industry to modern rifles — are the main weapon in defence and hunting. The sling is however still in use, due to scarcity of guns and cost of ammunition. When travelling, most men carry a long-handled, small-headed axe of the shape of a halberd. Before the gun, sword and spear, with shield and chainmail for protection, were in use. Bow and arrow are identified with the pagan way of life, and has supposedly not been used since conversion to Islam.

#### AREA:

The Kohistani people occupy the area of the western tributaries and west bank of the Indus River between Bisham and Tangir (see map), as well as contributing about half the population of the two communities Jalkót and Pálas on the east bank of the Indus. The

area is generally known as Aba Sind Kohistán (Indus Kohistan) in Swat. The population may be estimated to total some 15 000 individuals.

#### SUBDIVISIONS:

Kohistán is divided into two local dialects, separating Jijál-Patan-Seo and the trans-Indus Kohistani speakers from the remaining communities. Socio-political units correspond to territorial subdivisions of smaller size. Where a compact winter village is found, its inhabitants form an autonomous political unit. Where settlement is dispersed, territorial units with vague «centers» are defined:

Compact villages: Lahór, Bankótt, Ránóliá, Jijál, Patan, Seo, Jalkót, Pálas. Dispersed habitation: Dúbér valley, centering in Duber Fort. Lower Kandíá, centering in Tóti. Middle Kandíá, centering in Karang. Upper Kandíá, centering in Gabrál.

#### SETTLEMENT PATTERN:

The contrast between compact and dispersed villages pertains only to winter dwellings. In the utilization of an area with rather unusual characteristics, the Kohistanis practice an extreme form of transhumance, oscillating between altitudes of 2000 and 14 000 feet. Most families have 4—5 houses for the different seasons of the year; apart from the eight named winter villages, the valleys are characterized by *dispersed* settlement, usually in small hamlets. At any one time most of the houses in the territory will be uninhabited, nearly the whole population being concentrated in the altitude belt appropriate to the season. All such hamlets or separate houses are called *bándás*, only the large, compact village is referred to as *Kjli*.

#### HISTORY:

Several of the Chinese pilgrims of the 3rd to 6th Century must, from their description of their route, have passed through this way (cf Stein 1942, pp 49. ff.); they were however — maybe not un-



reason — too impressed by the difficulties of travel through this nearly impassable area to even mention the local inhabitants.

According both to Kohistani and Pathan tradition, the population remained pagan in religion till fairly recently, some 6—10 generations ago, when they were forcibly converted by Pathan zealots, led by the holy leaders Akhund Sâdiq Bâbâ, Mîan Bâqi Bâbâ, and Mîan Bâbâ (by Pathan genealogies, based on written evidence, 8 generations removed). Politically, the area remained independent after conversion.

The Yusufzai State of Swat, which was founded in tribal territory between 1919 and 1926, has recently extended its control to include the whole of Aba Sind province, completing this annexation in 1940. Before this, no centralized administration for the area existed in recent times, though a certain local chief, Abdus Samad, was able by intriguing with the competing states of Swat and Amb, and receiving subsidies from both, to gain control of the lower part of the west bank of Indus, including the communities of Bankôt, Lahôr, Bishâm Shang, and Kerrei (Karoora valley). The annexation by Swat was fairly bloodless and the recent period of administration peaceful; this has enabled the Swat Government to lay telephone lines to their military posts and to some extent improve communications. Sir Aurel Stein was thus able, as the first European, to visit the area in 1941 (Stein 1942). There do not seem to have been any other European travellers in the province.

## SUBSISTENCE AND ECONOMY

The economy is mixed, based on agriculture as well as livestock.

### AGRICULTURE:

Staple crops are maize, wheat, barley, and rice; maize is by far the most important. The area lies on the very edge of the monsoon belt, Kandia valley entirely outside it, so rainfall in the summer is at best very slight and erratic. All crops consequently require arti-

ficial irrigation. Water is supplied in plenty by the streams carrying meltwater from the snow and glaciers of the high mountains. It is deflected in irrigation channels to the fields, at times for considerable distances, up to one mile or more. In the Kandia mountains, even artificial pasture areas are produced by damming and deflecting the courses of the small streams. The irrigation channels are usually simply dug into the hillside and embanked with rock and turf; where cliff faces prove difficult to negotiate, the water is carried in wooden ducts, suspended from the cliff or supported from below by long poles.

All the utilized land is terraced, both because of the excessive angle of the slope and so as to facilitate irrigation. The terrace wall is frequently higher than the plot of land is wide. The wall is invariably nearly vertical, built of unworked but well fitted rock. Most of the terrace construction was completed in pagan times, according to local tradition.

The fields are plowed by bullocks; the plow is of the same type as found in Swat — it is made of wood. The plows were reported to be like those of Swat — i. e. with use of saw-toothed sickle, and threshing by the oxen trampling the piled rice or wheat; in the case of maize, threshing by beating the cobs with round, heavy sticks. Rice fields are found in the very lowest parts of the valleys, probably no higher than 3000 feet above sea level. Maize is grown in the higher fields, in a belt extending up, perhaps, to 8000 feet altitude.

The fertility of the fields is maintained by manuring.

### LIVESTOCK:

The domesticated animals are buffalo, goat, cow, chicken, donkeys, and mules. Of these, the buffalo is the main milk producer, though cow's and goat's milk are also used. Sheep and goats are utilized mainly for their meat and wool. Oxen, cows, and occasionally other animals are used for plowing and threshing. Chickens are not commonly kept. Mules and donkeys are used for transport, where the terrain permits.



## TRANSHUMANCE:

Economic activities are best seen in relation to yearly cycle of migration, which might be exemplified by the yearly round of the people of Patan. In the spring, the winter village on the bank of the Indus is abandoned, after a certain number of nursery plots for rice seedlings have been planted. The population then splits up into its major component segments and moves up to the main maize agricultural belt, between 4 and 8 thousand feet. This first step upward is taken some time around April or May. Here, the fields are plowed and the maize planted in the course of the next month or so. Around the onset of summer — i. e., the beginning of June — the second movement takes place: up to the lower pasture areas, at 8 to 12 000 feet. Here the cattle graze until the high pastures close to the permanent snowline mature some time in the month of July, at which time the majority of the population shifts for the third time, to the highest camping sites, marked by very simple rock huts or shelters at 12 to 14 000 feet. In the meantime, many or most of the men have made a visit to the valley bottom near the winter village to do the plowing of the ricefields and the transplantation of the seedlings to the main fields. Apart from this time, only a handful of people, who tend to the irrigation of the rice and maize fields, are found in the lowlying areas between spring and autumn.

The season in the high mountain pastures is limited to 40—50 days, by which time severe nights reduce the pasturage and are dangerous for the buffalo. The people then move for the fourth time: down to the lower pasture areas, where they can linger yet another month. By the end of September, nightly frosts start reaching down also to this area, and the maize in the terraced fields below is ripe. A fifth move brings the people down to do the harvesting. A part of the crop is transported down to the winter village; the remainder is stored in grains bins at this altitude, to be used for seed, and for food in the following spring and summer. These grain bins are abandoned unguarded when the population in October—November performs its sixth and last migration of the

20

year: down to the winter village on the bank of the Indus, to harvest the rice, and reside till next spring.

A similar pattern of transhumance characterizes the other Kohistāi groups. Those occupying the compact winter villages of Ranolia

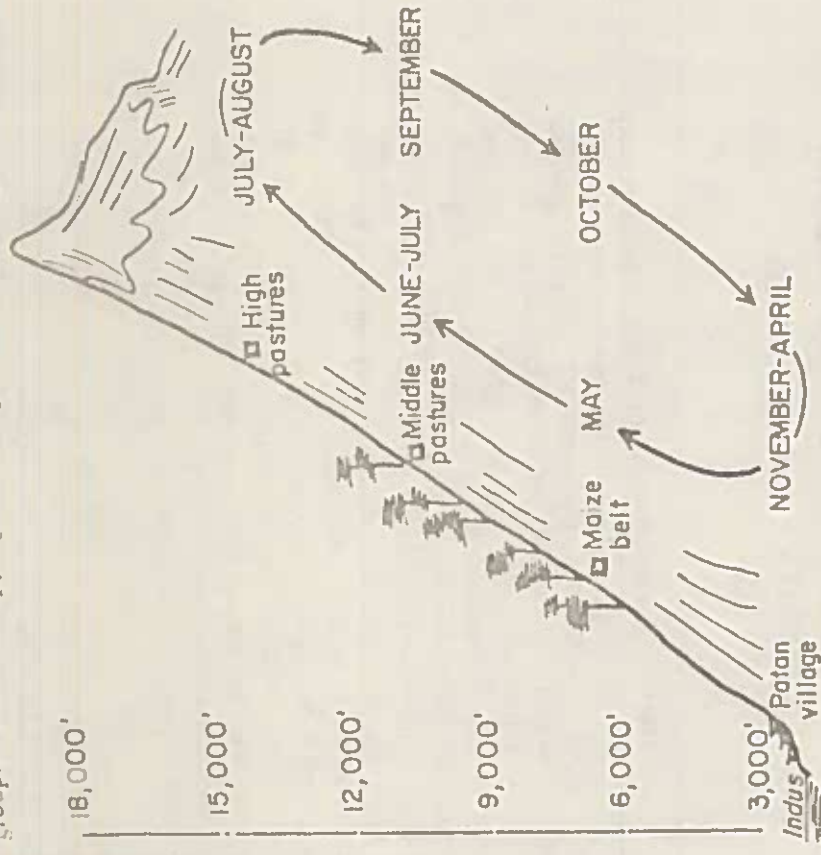


Figure 1.: Diagrammatic representation of the transhumant cycle in the Patan area, Indus Kohistan.

and Seo move in a fashion identical with Patanwals. In the Duber and Kandia areas, one finds at least three different zones for different seasons, but none of these form a concentrated settlement.

The pattern of periodicity thus enables the population to utilize even the highest-lying part of their territory during its brief period

21



of productivity. It also has the advantage of simplifying the combination of the agricultural and herding activities. In the period while the crop is in the fields, the herds, and with them most of the necessary daily work and majority of the population, are found up in the mountains, and no problem of fencing of fields or careful herding of the animals arises. The pastures that are found on the same altitude as the fields can, however, be utilized in the periods of seeding and harvesting respectively — which is also when a certain amount of animal labor for agriculture is required.

There is no separate terminology for this series of different settlements, and no fixed number of them — while one family or group may chose to camp in a series of as much as five different places in one year, it may be more practical for others, or in other years, not to utilize the highest pastures, reducing the series to three. The habitation sites all have proper names, but are uniformly known as *bándas*. Subcategories of them may be indicated by naming the season in which they are inhabited, e. g. *pashakál bándá* — monsoon camps, or by the local valley etc. in which a group of them may be situated.

#### GRAZING AND HERDING:

The different bandas and areas owned collectively by kinship groups; individuals belonging to the group may freely graze any number of animals in the area, or they may individually decide not to utilize the area at all that year, and no compensation is paid one way or the other. The whole group may however decide to sublet their area for one or several years, in which case a rent is charged, which is subdivided within the group.

Around any one camp site, the territory is divided into two categories: that particularly well suited to buffalo, in one direction from the houses, and the more precipitous parts, in the other direction, for cattle, sheep and goats. The latter are driven off in the morning in the appropriate direction, and permitted to wander about unattended till evening. The buffalo, on the other hand, are herded

all through the day. This herding duty is divided between the different households so that they are responsible for the herd by turns, each one day for every buffalo they own.

#### DAIRYING:

Techniques and equipment for handling milk and milk products are very simple. The buffalo is the main source of milk. The person milking it squats on the ground and milks into a small container of pottery, iron, or tin. The milk is then poured into a very large pottery container, ranging in size up to as much as, roughly, 15 gallons. After a day of storing, it turns to *márfó* — milk turned sour and firm in texture, a type of yogourt. In this state it forms one of the staples of the diet. Butter is produced by rotating a multibladed, propeller-like implement in the soured milk — preferably in a somewhat smaller container. The butter produced is invariably purified to *ghée* by repeated melting and skimming. Such clarified butter, as well as being a basic ingredient in all Kohistani cooking, is also the main produce available for marketing. It is stored in goat-hiders or old petrol tins, and *ghee* is marketed periodically brought down to Swat or Allai for sale or barter.

From the soured milk, a simple form of uncured cheese is also produced by pressing in a piece of cloth. The sour milk is wrapped in the cloth, placed in a slightly tilted, large and flat wooden tray, and weighted down with a large, smooth rock. Most of the whey is thus driven out, while the cheese substance remains; it is then promptly eaten, in its fresh state.

#### HUNTING AND GATHERING:

The food produced by agricultural and pastoral pursuits is to some extent supplemented by gathering of wild plants, and by hunting. All ages and both sexes contribute to the gathering activities, mainly the collecting of mushrooms in the appropriate seasons, and all through the summer collecting of young bracken sprouts, to be boiled as a kind of vegetable.



Hunting is popular, as a sport and pastime, though game is scarce. It is done with slings and traps, and occasionally with firearms, though both guns and ammunition are still quite scarce. Finally, a sporadic source of income is woodcutting, in connection with larger lumbering projects administered by business families of saintly descent, residing in the administered areas of Pakistan.

## DIVISION OF LABOR

The overwhelming majority of the population in Indus Kohistan are subsistence farmers, working in fields which, at least temporarily, belong to them, and claiming the total crop as their own. There is, however, a small minority of specialists of various kinds, paid by the remainder of the population in return for their services.

### TENANTS:

A certain division of labor between the men has already been indicated, in that a few individuals remain behind to tend the fields and look after the irrigation while the majority of the community migrates up to the higher areas. These men are called tenants (*dchqáns*).

The tenants constitute a small group of people with no particular skills other than those of the average farmer; they have no local rights to land and thus maintain themselves by working for their more well-to-do fellows. Most farmers do all the work connected with the raising of the crop themselves — short of looking after the irrigation in the summer. Some few, however, have enough land so they chose to sublet a fraction, or the whole, to one or several tenants. The tenant then normally performs all the manual labor connected with raising a crop (apart from assistance given by the master at the time of harvesting and threshing) but has no capital invested in it — seed, tools, and animals are supplied by the master. In return for his services the tenant receives  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the crop.

Where their duties are more limited — such as merely looking after the irrigation of the fields in the summer — they are paid in clarified butter.

The tenant families are of diverse origins — some belong to the lineage resident in the area, but have lost their land by sale or by an ancestor having committed a murder and thus been divested of his right to own land. Others may be of foreign descent, though by now Kohistói-speaking. In Patan, most of them are supposed to be the descendants of old captives in war. In Seo, the tenants trace their origin from Rhambet (Torwáli) in the Swat valley. In Duber, some belong to the local lineages, others are of unknown origin. Many of the tenants in the Kandia valley are called Kashmiris.

Tenants have no vote in the village council, and are thus politically dependent on their masters — but they are free to seek new protectors, they are not tied to particular fields, persons, or localities. Their caste status is ambiguous — relating to the basic ambiguity of the whole concept of caste and marriage in the area (cf pp. 36 ff). The status itself does not seem to imply a necessary caste separation; where the tenant belongs to the local lineage, intermarriage seems to take place with the landholders, though the tenant is clearly of a lower status than his propertied relatives. In the case of families of foreign origin, however, a caste barrier is maintained.

### CRAFTSMEN:

In addition to the tenants, a variable number of craftsman families are scattered in the area. Each craft is considered the occupation of a separate *qóúm* — loosely translatable as caste (p. 36). The blacksmith, carpenter, weaver, barber, and porter are represented — of these, the first two skills may be combined in one person of either caste. Of all these, only the blacksmith needs to be represented locally — carpenter work is frequently done by the farmer himself, cloth and pottery may be traded in from outside the territory, and a barber is a luxury not considered essential e. g. in Ranoliá or Duber.



All these different craftsman families are considered Pathan in origin, and most of them speak Pashto as their home language, even after innumerable generations of local residence. They form separate lineages of fair depth (a geneology of eight generations was collected) but limited span. The practitioners of each craft are regarded as forming ideally endogamous groups; the farmer population never gives women in marriage to them. Theoretically, they may acquire land and become farmers, but whether this is a practical possibility is doubtful. The craftsmen have no voice in the village council.

The relation between the blacksmith and the farmers is the only one that appears to be standardized in the area. Each smith (or rather, smith *household*, where father and son, or two brothers, work together) is responsible for a particular territory, i. e. section of the farming community; he repairs the standard agricultural equipment of his whole section and receives a set compensation, computed pr. bullock pair, that is, pr. working plow, of 10 *seers* maize and 5 *seers* wheat pr. year. (a *seer* is somewhat more than two pounds). For extra jobs he is paid in clarified butter. The barber of Patan receives 8 lbs grain/family member/year.

#### MIANS:

In Seo and Patan there is also a small settlement of *Mians*, i. e. persons of saintly family. They are the descendants of Mian Bábá, who was instrumental in converting the area to Islam, and are Pashto-speaking. They have been given land and become local farmers, but occupy a special status because of their religious and magical status, and due to the caste barrier they maintain towards all other groups. A special relationship is also maintained between Patan and the descendants of Akhund Bábá, who also figured prominently in the history of conversion. His descendants live mainly in the Pathan village of Kábulgrám, 40 miles lower down the Indus. They have the right to collect two pounds of clarified butter pr. household pr. year, in thankful remembrance of his zeal in Islamizing Kohistan.

#### TRADE:

The Kohistani communities depend on a certain amount of trade to secure some essential products, mainly salt, iron, and some textiles, as well as various luxury items (Such a standard trade item as *tea* has not yet penetrated to Kohistan, and only reached the neighboring Pathan areas some 30 years ago). Much of this trade is carried on by the Kohistani farmers themselves, trudging for many days over the high passes and along the foaming Indus to sell, buy, or barter in the bazars of Swat. The nearest bazar is in Karórra at the termination of the motorable road from Mingóra. This bazar counts 50—60 booths — but most Kohistanis who make the trip prefer to continue on to the main bazar of Mingóra.

A fair amount of goods is also carried on the newly constructed track along the Indus up to Seo, by the mule caravans of Pathan traders of the Páráchá caste.

Most of the trade is financed by the sale of clarified butter, or by the profits gained on carrying spices from Tangir (N. of Kandia) to the bazar. Occasionally, though unwillingly, Kohistanis also seek work in the richer areas of Swat and return with their profits in the form of goods. Some money may also be brought into the area by the few individuals who have sought work in the administered areas of Pakistan.

#### WEALTH:

These various activities and the pattern of division of labor produce fair differences in wealth within the local community. Thus in Duber, the richest man owns enough land to employ 8—10 tenants. In the community of Patan, six or eight individuals are wealthy enough to have lands employing 3—4 tenants; such persons were estimated to own some 50 sheep, 20 cattle, and 10 buffalo, while the average pr. household was estimated as ranging around 3—4 buffalo, 8 cows and oxen, and maybe 20 sheep and goats. The basis for the difference in size of maximal land holdings in Duber and Patan are discussed below, p.



POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Political groups and subdivisions are defined by three main criteria: descent; a working political alliance; and common ownership of a territory and thus co-*residence*. Though there is a tendency to use the idiom of kinship when discussing political structure, this does not always hold true, and criteria for political affiliations of a purely non-kinship type, such as standing friendship between persons or groups, or pure political opportunism, are freely verbalized and accepted. This has led, in the past, to the establishment of common territorial rights for groups not closely related by descent. In such cases, no fictional kinship need be developed, since the political alliance in itself legitimizes co-ownership. But since the concepts of grouping and rights to land are *largely* those of descent and inheritance, these exceptions are not emphasized. Thus different criteria exist, but their logical interrelation appears to be unresolved. Both the discovery and description of the main features of political organization is therefore problematical. In the following, I shall first outline the descent groups and their segments, together with their genealogical charters, and later relate this to the territorial organization and land ownership, before finally suggesting the mode in which the political organization functions, and the contemporary pattern of factional alliances.

DESCENT GROUPS:

The Kohistāi population is subdivided into a number of segmentary patrilineal lineages with a complex genealogical charter. These lineages, on any recognized level of segmentation, are called *khēls*, and generally bear the name of the apical ancestor of the segment. Most of them form localized groups with defined and exclusive rights to land. Let it be emphasized that these groups are *not* exogamous; there is on the contrary a general preference for endogamy.

The genealogical charters show none of the regularity and simplification usually found with African lineage systems; in this re-

spect they are more similar to the Arab — and Biblical — genealogies. They frequently enumerate links connecting a father to his only son — of no structural significance for the segmentation of the group. The genealogies are of considerable depth; thus one informant was

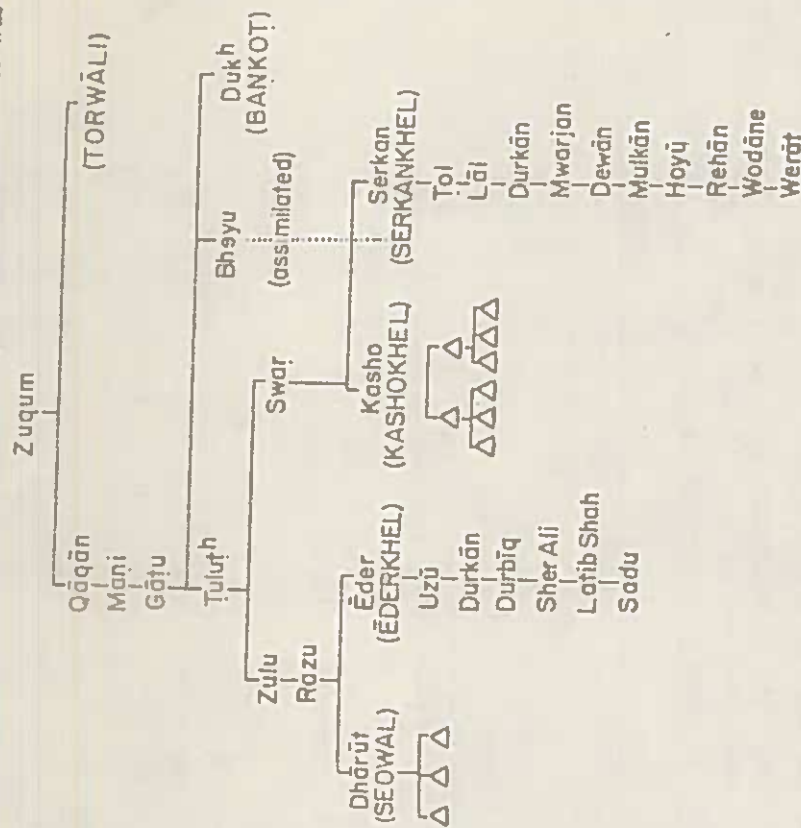
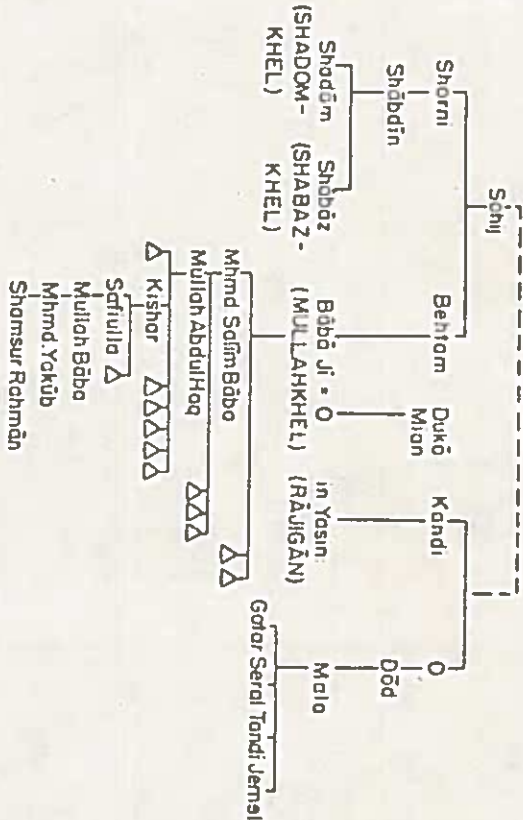


Figure 2.: Genealogy of major political groups in E. Kohistan area, showing variations in depth (Eder khel and Serkan khel) and in pattern of segmentation (Sawal and Kasho khel).

able to enumerate the names of 17 generations of ascending ancestors. Even longer genealogies have been collected in neighboring areas (Morgenstierne 1950) from Afghan and Chirali Káfirs, containing as much as 54 generations, and showing agreement in genea-



*Eastern group:* The people of the Patan area — speakers of the eastern dialect of Kohsteti — disclaim any relationship with their neighbors in Duber-Kandia, and trace their origin from a pre-Moslem Arab king named Zukum. On the other hand, the Tor-walis of the Swat valley are regarded as related, as they are descen-



*Figure 3.: Genealogy of major political groups in W. Kohistan area, and pattern of internal segmentation of Mullah khel.*

ded from a younger son of Zukum. This linkage between the two peoples was also alleged by the Torwāls. Evidently some such relationship was also indicated to Biddulph (1880, p. 69). Their Arab descent gives them a claim to prestige in relation to the other Kohisti, who are only Aġam, i. e. non-Arab Moslem. A discussion of some of the mythological history connected with the genealogy is given in Appendix II. Suffice it to say that conversion to Islam supposedly took place at the point of most significant segmentation, i. e. in the lifetime of the apical ancestors of the main localized lineages (Ēder khél, Kasha khél, etc.).

*Western group:* This is also the case for the western group in Duber-Kandia: conversion took place at the time of Bábá Jí, Shárrni, and Kandi. These genealogies, however, lack the unifying superstructure of the eastern genealogy, and the several apical ancestors remain unconnected. Some type of relationship was agreed to exist between Shárrni and Kandi, the last king of the area, but no one could give particulars. Similarly, Ddádá is supposed to have been the sister's son of Kandi, but no one was able to give any information on his father's name or origin. The genealogies given were claimed to exhaust the available historical information, and no one felt any embarrassment about their unresolved features.

*Segmentation:* The major descent groups are internally segmented; e. g. Kashaó khel into two subdivisions, each of which is again subdivided into three, which in turn consist of several households. Such segments, down to the household level, retain considerable political autonomy. Indeed, it might be more appropriate to regard the households as autonomous units, which form alliances — frequently, but not exclusively — along the lines of segmental affiliation.

The household generally consists of no more than an elementary family of father, mother, and their unmarried or newly married children, but may occasionally include closely related individuals, or even maintain its unity as a small extended family.

## LAND OWNERSHIP:

The system of land ownership has been changing rapidly in the Kohistan area, and for an understanding of the present relations between lineages and territories it is necessary to consider these changes. The outstanding feature of the system was the practice of periodic re-allotment of land — a system also found among the Pathans of the Swat valley — which persisted to some degree till it was banned by the Wali of Swat in 1948, and permanent settlement was enforced.

*The system of re-allocation:* The principle on which this system is based is quite simple, and occurs also among other Indo-European



speaking peoples (Pathans, Baluchis, ancient Celtic and German tribes). The descent group owns the rights to land in common, and the problem is to achieve an equitable distribution between its component members. Since no two plots of land are really identical, a semipermanent division can never be fully satisfactory. Instead, the land is subdivided into blocks corresponding to the segments of the descent group, and each segment occupies each in alternate or rotating fashion. Thus each segment will, by the completion of the cycle, have occupied all the different areas an equal length of time, and full equality is ensured. Within each segment, land may be subdivided into lots according to the size of the household, or, as among the Pathans, according to the adult male's traditional share of the total. Thus, a person does not own particular fields, but a specified fraction of the common land of his lineage segment, and at the end of each standard period, he moves with his segment to a new locality allotted to it, where he again is allotted fields corresponding to his share of the total, to be utilized in the next period. In the same way, not *land*, but a specified *share* of the common lands is passed on as inheritance from father to son.

The tendency in the Kohistan area has been towards more and more permanent settlement and division of land. Thus, shortly before the memory of the older informants, all land was held on this temporary basis; while at the time of enforced settlement by the Wali of Swat, only a part of the agricultural area — but all the summer grazing areas — were subject to re-allotment. There is also a slight regional difference, in that the system has been more completely abandoned in Duber, where no one I met was able to explain satisfactorily how it functioned and the young men seemed totally unfamiliar with the principle; while informants in Kandia were more aware of it and able to expound it; and in Patan fairly large areas were still held on these terms in 1948.

#### RELEVANCE TO PRESENT DISTRIBUTION OF LINEAGES:

According to informants in Kandia, the whole area of Kandia-Duber belonged in a single scheme of rotation less than hundred

years ago<sup>1</sup>). Land was re-allotted every fourth or fifth year, at which time the lineage segments occupying Kandia moved to Duber, and those in Duber moved to Kandia. However, a group at present residing in Kandia created a feud by burning a house in Duber; the conflict spread and many people were killed. Thus a basic rift was created between the two main political factions of that time, and cooperation between them broke down — the one remaining in Duber, the other in Kandia. Since this separation was caused by an actual political conflict, and not the result of an ordered and peaceful division, political alliances, rather than purely genealogical considerations, were decisive for where each segment settled. Therefore, the Mullah khel partly resides in Duber, partly in the Middle Kandia valley, the Shadom khel is found partly in Lower and Upper Kandia, partly in Duber, etc.

In other words, the repeated division of the lands between different lineages and their segments generates factionalism. The interests of each segment has to be re-asserted every fifth year in rivalry with related groups of the same level of segmentation; and consequently, alliances of mutual support are sought with more distantly related segments of the same level, i. e. alliances are established between groups which individually never stand in opposition to each other in the lineage system. A similar effect may be observed among the Pathans of the Swat valley. Rights to land thus become a matter of power politics and factionalism rather than genealogy and inheritance; and in time territorial groups are created which to some extent cross-cut the larger genealogically defined units by the members of a *faction* fusing their shares.

The periodic re-allotment continued within the separate areas of Duber and Kandia, but applied to a progressively smaller and smaller

<sup>1</sup>) This is indirectly confirmed by evidence from a settlement of Pathans in Jag in the Duber valley (see p. 45). When discussing the legitimacy of their purchase of Jag, four generations ago, they cited a (*fabulous*) price as the purchase sum, and listed persons in Kandia as well as Duber as recipients. How residents of Kandia should have land rights in Duber they were unable to explain. Doubtless the purchase took place at a time when the land was held in common by the lineage of the Duber-Kandia area.



fraction of the land. At the time of enforced permanent allotment only limited fields remained in Ránóliá, none in Duber. All the mountain pastures are still, however, held in common and re-allotted every twenty years, and in the case of income from it, such as rent paid by nomads for grazing or timber merchants for logging rights, the share of each family is computed on the basis of the number of family members.

The community of Patan has no traditions of sharing a larger territory with any other group. There is, however, agreement that all the land of the Patan area was held in common by its citizens in the past and periodically re-allotted, but permanent division was made for progressively larger and larger areas as time passed, and at the time of enforced settlement, only a fraction of the lands remained as common holdings. The mountain pastures, however, are still held on temporary basis.

Taking the structural implications of the pattern of land ownership — now largely discontinued — into account, one can better understand how the discrepancies between territorial-political units and lineage groups can come about, although the idiom of kinship and lineage continues to apply in the political field. It should now be possible to outline the territorial units and describe their political organization.

TERRITORIES:

*Hamlets, Wards:* Where one finds concentrated winter villages, these are divided into separate wards, each inhabited by a major lineage group. In the areas of scattered settlement, smaller lineage segments with their immediate dependents and political allies tend to cluster in hamlets or districts. For example, in Patan, the Kasho khel has its separate ward in the winter village, while each mountain camping place is exclusively allotted to one or two of its component six segments. The subterritories have clearly defined borders and correspond roughly in size or economic value, since they were — or, in the case of mountain pasture areas, still are — the territorial units in the system of temporary allotment.

TERRITORIES		RESIDENT LINEAGES AND CASTES			
		landowners	tenants		craftsmen
Western dialect group:					
Lahór .....		?	?		
Ránóliá .....		?	?		
Dubér .....		Mullah K. Shádom K.	Kamundsu K. Biju K.	Jag Pathans	weavers blacksmiths, carpenters
Lower Kandíá .....		Shádom K. Shábáz K.	Gótár K. Seral K. Tandi K. Jarnal K.	—	blacksmiths
Middle Kandíá .....		Mullah K. Shábáz K.	Gotar K. Seral K. Tandi K. Jarnal K.	Kashmir K. Kashmir K.	blacksmiths
Upper Kandíá .....		Shádom K.	?	Gujars	blacksmiths
Eastern dialect group:					
Bannkótt .....		?	?		
Jijál .....		?	?		
Patan .....	Mians	Éder K. Kasho K. Ser- kán K. (in which assi- milated: Beyo K.)	Nilo K. Pakra K.	—	blacksmiths carpenters potters barbers
Seo .....	Mians	Dhárut K.	Sugo K. Demo K.	—	blacksmiths, weavers
½ Jalkót .....		?	?		
½ Pálas .....		?	?		



#### ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES:

The standard procedure whenever a decision must be reached or a group must act as a corporate unit is to constitute a «council» (*ferga*), and through discussion reach agreement and a plan of action. The corporate nature of action of any kind is thus verbally expressed in the terms that there was a «jirga», and so-and-so action followed on the discussions. In matters of political administration, the procedure is formalized in terms of recognized representatives meeting in a village council, to correspond to a highly formal ideal of administrative processes.

*Patan*: Thus in the village or territory of Patan, there is a central council (g(h)éra jerga) of 12—13 members (*zétwán*). This council also has a clerk or agent (*kotwál*), who is of poor family and has no vote in the council or political powers of any kind, but who in return for a set remuneration serves as messenger, informs the council members of time and place of meeting, etc. Before the conquest by Swat, the council had a separate fortified tower in the winter village of Patan. Decisions of the council are definitive and must be followed; where basic agreement can not be reached by the council members, the matter is postponed, and informal discussions and «deals» are arranged, in preparation for reintroducing the topic at a later meeting.

The members sit in the village council as the recognized representatives of segments of the three major lineages — or rather, of the political groups of which these lineage segments form the core, they thus speak also for the allies and clients of the segment, rather than for the strictly genealogically defined group. A man is selected to represent his group for his oratorical and argumentative abilities and is exchanged the moment he loses the confidence of the group he should represent. In actual fact, he seems to be exchanged often, most informants said every one or two years, unless he emerges as the unchallenged speaker and leader of the group. Since he is the elected representative of a recognized group, there are no formal restrictions to candidacy — e. g. as in the rest of the area, a requirement that he must own land. In addition to the three lineages, the community of *Mians* has a seat in the council.

The central council, in its formal assumptions, presupposes the existence of smaller, less formalized councils-of-each of the groups represented; thus each of the 13 members must be appointed or acclaimed by a council meeting of the members of the group he is to represent. Similarly, the smooth functioning of the central council presupposes less formal meetings within and between its component factions.

A man may call a meeting of — or, to translate the idiom, «make» — any council in which he has a right to speak at any time. If he is calling the central council, he does so through the *kotwál* agent; smaller groups are collected by himself or his dependent male relatives — brothers, sons, etc. The only corporate group which can act without a preceding council discussion is the *household*, in which the senior man has unquestioned authority. Patan consists of some 300 such relatively speaking autonomous households; the system of councils functions to coordinate them into corporate groups of varying size and composition.

*Duber-Kandiá*: There is a clear difference between the east and west dialect areas in their formal political organization — compared to Patan, the western area is more segmented and autocratic. In the words of a highly travelled mullah, our companion for several days across the Patan-Kandiá pass: «In Patan everyone is equal; here in Kandiá, Subhidar Sahib is the leader of the whole valley.» The crux of the difference lies in the greater emphasis given to descent and seniority in the Duber-Kandiá area. The son of a leader should, unless he proves himself unable to wield the authority, succeed his father to leadership; and the senior son is regarded as the proper successor. In every lineage on every level of segmentation, a senior line will thus split off and he vested with a particular position of authority, and a hierarchy of leaders is produced, each claiming authority over larger and more inclusive descent groups. However, lacking in any sacred sanctions or political machinery to maintain his position, the area controlled by any leader is limited in practice by factional activity. Thus the theory of senior line autocracy can only be realized in part, and is complimented and modified by the institutionalization of councils. All the men of «moderate» seniority



in Duber thus meet in a common council of ideally 20 members, which has the power to make decisions. The members are thus not elected and delegated; they refer to qualifications of descent and seniority, and thus recognize differences in status between themselves. Only persons who own land sit in the council. While the councils of Patan are colleges of equals, speaking for groups, the councils of the Duber-Kandiā area councils of the elite, speaking for themselves, and their followers. Considering the role of these councils in allotting land to lineage segments and individuals, it is only to be expected that the emphasis on senior lines is correlated with considerable differences in wealth. Thus, the senior leader of the Mullah khel in Duber has 10 tenants, while the richest members of the Patan community have land for no more than 3—4 tenants. Members of the central council are called *zētan*. The council has no fixed meeting-place, though a conveniently located mosque is frequently chosen.

#### RELIGIOUS LEADERS:

The mullahs constitute a status group that has a somewhat incongruous political position. Essentially, they are moslem «priests» — persons who have, through studies and dedication, achieved a knowledge of theology and ritual, and have been formally invested and given a diploma by an older mullah. Such mullahs, and their pupils (*tālib* or *murīd*) are, by their knowledge of religion and law, regarded by many as particularly competent in political matters. In the Patan area, these religious qualifications can to some extent be assimilated with other qualifications in choosing elected representatives to the councils. But in the Duber-Kandiā area, where criteria of descent and seniority dominate, the claims of religious leaders are not adaptable to the political structure. Thus mullahs with their followers remain outside the formal structure, but are none the less organized as groups around leaders, and their political qualifications are fairly widely recognized. They then tend to form pressure groups, and are active as controlling and retributive agents. Thus, where injustice has been done, and, due to political intrigue in the

councils, no action is taken, a group of *tālibs* frequently catch the culprit and beat him soundly with sticks, or, in more extreme cases, burn his house and drive him out of the territory. Even quite prominent leaders have thus been tyrannized and forced to submit to the control of some prominent mullah.

#### FACIONS:

Political alliances within each territory or council area are complex and constantly fluctuating, and are usually arranged in relation to particular «deals». The over-all alignment of communities to particular territories is a different matter. Here, the whole Kohistan area is tied with the Pathan areas of Swat — and further — in an all-pervasive system of two great alliances or factions (*dela*). Most Pathan communities are politically mixed, i. e. internal factionalism and external alliances are closely interrelated. This is not true to the same extent in Kohistan; in terms of the two large alliances, Patan belongs totally to the one, Duber to the other, while the Kandiā valley is split between the two, with no clear division of territory between them. Open warfare frequently took place between the two alliances before the area was pacified by Swat's government; consequently, the Kandiā valley, where both parties co-existed, is studded with the crumbling remains of fortified towers, while these are more rare in the Duber and Patan areas.

#### CENTRIFUGAL AND CENTRIPETAL FORCES:

With the introduction of external government by Swat state, certain changes were initiated or accelerated in the Patan community. The compact winter village, and especially its division into wards, is slowly dissolving. At the time of full autonomy and temporary allotment of land, it was necessary to remain physically close to one's political fellows — both for the sake of defence, and to protect one's interests within the group. With permanent settlement of land the establishment of a police post, a movement has started away from the village, and new houses are being erected close to



fields. Both the motives of efficiency and privacy were cited as an explanation of this tendency — in the six months of winter residence, one was right by one's own fields, and also away from the gossip and intrigue of the village. Thus, though factionalism and insecurity in one situation served to tie members closer together in a compact village, this same factional activity, in the changed situation resulting from permanent land settlement and greater physical safety, operates as a centrifugal force.

#### *CASTES (qoum = nation, group, caste).*

The permission or ban on intermarriage between different descent groups carries hierarchical connotations, though no true caste system is found. A very clear distinction is made between the giving and receiving of women. Thus women are given in marriage to equals and superiors, while they are received in marriage from equals and inferiors. What is loosely termed a «caste» barrier in the present discussion, is thus a ban against the downward movement of women, not against taking a wife from the inferior group. However, though latter marriages do occur, they are not the rule, and seem to be motivated mainly by considerations of the personal attractiveness of the women. The caste position of the offspring is determined solely by the position of the father.

Any local group is then composed of several such «castes»; a person's caste status is unchangeably determined by the sole criterion of patrilineal descent; thus the castes constitute hierarchical groupings of lineages. The implications of a caste status vary for the different groups in the hierarchy — it is convenient to distinguish between the «true» Kohistanis and the Pashto-speakers (see table, p. 31).

Persons of the caste status *Mian* (descendants of Saints) are found in some Kohistai communities. They are immigrants of Pathan origin and language; their relative position is defined in Pathan society at the top of the hierarchy. This high position is also claimed for them, and accepted by others, in the Kohistan area; they will

not give women in marriage to any other group, but may marry the daughters of their inferiors. The Mullah khel Kohistanis claim Mian status (see Appendix I, p. 88); whether this claim is recognized by Pashto-speaking Mians I do not know.

The various *craftsman* families are similarly derived from Pathan society and speak largely Pashto. Their position in the caste hierarchy is explicit and universally recognized among Pathans as being below landowning farmers. In Swat they give their daughters in marriage to higher groups but can not receive women in return. In the Kohistan area, however, the craftsmen appear to form a virtually completely endogamous group, which neither gives women to, nor receives women from, any other group. Only one contrary case was discovered, after persistent questioning: a marriage between a blacksmith and a Kohistai-speaking woman of a purely tenant lineage (the Kashmir khel) which holds no land anywhere in the Indus Kohistan area.

This difference in the marriage practices of craftsmen among the Pathans vs. in the Indus Kohistan area may derive from the similarity in the connotations of hypergamy and the difference in the composition of the societies. Among Swat Pathans, landowners constitute a small category of families with unquestioned high status; among Kohistanis, the bulk of the population is made up of landowning farmers. Furthermore, Pathans have a generally low opinion of Kohistanis. It is thus only reasonable that Pathan craftsmen refuse to recognize the subordination implied in non-reciprocal giving of women to common Kohistani farmers; while these in turn deny the craftsmen reciprocity, referring to the criterion of land ownership. It then becomes virtually impossible to establish affinal ties between the two groups.

Conceptually, each separate craft is further associated with a separate caste, as among Pathans. In the Kohistan area, however, marriages are actually negotiated freely between families pursuing different crafts. I found no evidence of a hierarchical ordering of the different craftsman groups.

The main problem related to the caste barrier which is maintained within the Kohistai-speaking population, dividing it into a super-



and a sub-ordinated group, related only by occasional hypergamous marriages. Various origins are given for this division (App. II), all of them emphasizing its hierarchical nature; but structural criteria for the division are difficult to find. One might illustrate the relationship between the two «castes» by the example of Duber valley (see p. 31): The valley is dominated by the Mullah khel (being merely the name of the lineage, and bearing no relation to the political role of mullah = priests, discussed on p. 34), which together with the Shádom khel occupies the superior caste position. Most of the land is owned by these two lineages; but some members of these lineages are found who have no land, and work as tenants. The Kamundsu and Biju lineages, on the other hand, belong to the lower caste. Some of them are tenants, but many of them own land of their own. This has supposedly been «granted» them by the Mullah khel; but in any case, there is today no clear correlation between land ownership and caste position. As far as my information goes, however, it would seem that a title to land held by a member of the Kamundsu or Biju lineages does *not* give the right to sit in the central council for Duber. Finally, in Duber, the intrusive Pathan community in *Jag* (see p. 45) constitutes a third caste, inferior to the two Kohistani castes but superior to the Pathan craftsmen.

The explanation was usually cited for the division of the Kohistanis in two castes that the lineages of the lower caste are recent immigrants, and therefore politically inferior to the dominant lineages. This was also claimed in the Kandī valley — by both groups — but contradicted by their own genealogies, which derived the lineages of the lower caste from the sister's son of Kandī, the last and pagan king (Rājā) in the valley; one would thus think that they were well established and dominant some 8 generations ago. Another claim, that they were later converts to Islam, and thus, while still pagan, by law debarred from marrying Moslem women, may be more to the point. If conversion, as was probably the case, was correlated with an inversion of the power relations between two main sections of the society (cf. the driving out of Kandī's lineage and the reduction of his sister's son lineage to inferior status), such

a caste barrier may have been an important idiom in which to express this change in relative political power.

However this may be, all informants agreed that a caste barrier (in the specific sense I apply the term «caste» here) divides the main body of Kohistani farmers into two groups of unequal political power, but that this division is not correlated to title to land or to a division of labor between the two groups. The two «castes» are to some extent united by affinal and collateral relationship, established through hypergamous marriages. Such relationships do not, however, seem to carry any political implications — i. e. I found no evidence that a political client relationship was established or symbolized by the giving of a daughter or sister in marriage to a caste superior.

## SOLUTION OF CONFLICTS

By virtue of the multiple types of political ties that exist in the area, no maximal political unit can be defined; lineages are «associated in villages, several villages meet at times in supreme councils, and political alliances extend across ethnic frontiers. Thus conflicts between persons, however distant, are regarded as properly subject to the ordered functioning of law and armed conflict only arises where large groups are involved, mainly in territorial disputes, or through internal struggles for power — in other words, when the political ties break down. Such conflicts are now prevented from arising by the action of the government of Swat State.

The procedure adopted for the solution of individual conflicts varies with the nature of the conflict. Thus, personal revenge is regarded as a person's *right* in some situations, while compensation is called for in others. For minor conflicts within the local community, the senior men of a lineage may serve as arbitrators, or the case is brought before the appropriate council. In the case of conflicts between persons territorially removed, Mians or other persons of saintly repute frequently serve as arbitrators. Public pressure is very strong to accept the nomination of such arbitrators, and their verdict. Where concerted punitive action is called for, groups



of religious students (*tálibán*) have proved more readily responsive than the larger community of villagers under the direction of the council. Finally, it should be pointed out that the functioning of these institutions is now rather randomly modified by the action of the State administration of Swat; however, local customary law is officially recognized and followed by its courts in this area.

#### CUSTOMARY LAW:

*Property and inheritance:* Movable property (including livestock, implements, household equipment, personal effects) is private property and freely alienable by the owner. As for the rights of the father and husband to dispose of the property of his dependents, all informants claim that the Shariat (Islamic law) in its Hanafi interpretation is followed in such matters, as in most others — i. e. his limitations and responsibilities as a trustee are recognized. Movable property is inherited by sons and daughters in the proportion 2 : 1, and is in general subject to the Islamic law of inheritance. Immovable property (land, houses) is not freely disposable. Although, with permanent settlement, persons own particular fields and plots of land, their right to alienate this land is limited — the Islamic first rights of close kin, and of neighbors, are recognized. Thus, before selling to a nonlineage member, the permission of the lineage is required, and before the sale of land to an outsider is valid, it must be approved by the village council.

Immovable property can only be held by men, and is inherited from father to sons, who divide it equally. Islamic inheritance rules thus only apply to land with the profound modification that the rights of women, and relatives through female line, are not recognized. The right of widows and daughters to receive support is however attached to inherited land till their death or marriage, respectively.

*Theft:* Where a thief is caught in the house, or in the act of stealing (e. g. escaping with stolen cattle), he may be killed, and the family of the thief can raise no legitimate complaint. If the thief is caught only after the theft has been committed, the accusation

must be proved before the village council — proof depending upon witnesses, and the presence of the piece of property in the thief's possession. If the property is still in existence, it is returned to the owner together with a slight fine; if it has been demolished or consumed, its value is assessed and the owner is compensated.

*Adultery:* The aggrieved husband, surprising his wife and her partner in *flagrante*, has the unquestioned right to kill them both. Where he only kills the man, and not his wife, or where his revenge is delayed, the matter becomes more complicated, and the burden of proof (i. e. four witnesses) devolves on the husband. Thus the theory, though clear and radical, is usually complicated when put into practice, and frequently the cause of feuds.

*Murder:* i. e. the killing of a person (apart from purely accidental killing) when one has no pre-established right to do so, gives the relatives of the deceased the right to blood revenge, subsidiarily compensatory payment. The form of this blood revenge differs from that usually met with in acephalous societies in Africa or South-East Asia, and follows largely the same principles found otherwise in the Middle East area (Barth 1953).

Revenge is directed mainly towards the murderer himself. Only if he can not be reached is it redirected against one of his close agnatic relatives, primarily the senior man of his close family — a father, brother, or father's brother.

The right — and responsibility — to revenge devolves on the closest agnatic male relative of the deceased, in the order son — father or brother — father's brother. More distant agnatic relatives have the right only if no closer relative exists, i. e. the right to revenge passes in the same manner as inherited property, and the nearer relatives exclude the more distant. This principle is most clearly expressed in a case cited in Ránoliá: a man was killed, and since his son was away a more distant relative took the revenge. When the son later returned, he, as the closest relative, still had the right to revenge, and killed a second member of the murderer's immediate family. This second killing was accepted by the village council as revenge, not murder.

The close relatives may forego their right to revenge and seek a



settlement by compensation. The amount of compensations is stipulated by the village council, or a mediator; an important element is usually the giving of a woman in marriage from the family of the killer to a relative of the deceased.

If a confirmed murderer appears too clever and powerful to be reached by individual revenge, he may declare a public menace by the whole, or an active section, of the community, in which case his house is burned and he is driven out of the territory.

*Marriage*: is largely subject to Islamic law, and may be dissolved by the husband and not by the wife. Monogamy is the rule, though polygynous marriages do occur. A marriage can not take place against the will of the marriage guardian (father, brother, or near agnatic relative) of a girl, but probably can take place against the will of the girl (though some informants insisted the contrary). Marriage usually takes place very early, before the age of ten; the girl spends one night in the groom's house, whereupon she returns to her home again for some years until she reaches puberty. The option of puberty does not seem to be known as an item of law.

The *levirate* is strictly observed, and a breach of this right is classified with adultery, and gives the right of blood revenge.

#### HOUSEHOLDS, RELATIONS BETWEEN SEXES:

Each household is built around an elementary or polygynous family. Due to the brief nature of the enquiry, I have no census material to support this statement from informants. It was, however, easy to ascertain that the household group is small, counting very few adult members. Further observations on household and family life were complicated by extremely strict observance of purdah — very much stricter than among neighboring people of comparable economic standing. After the age of 8—10, the girl is completely separated from male society, and must not show her face to other men than her nearest relatives. A woman, walking through the fields or on the paths in the company of her husband, will leave her husband's side whenever a man appears, seek the shelter of a bush, and cover her head and face completely with her heavy black sheet, till the stranger has disappeared. Similarly, groups of women

working in the fields discontinue their work, and squat, totally covered by their sheets by the side of the terrace wall, when a man approaches. Etiquette requires the man to attempt to avoid the places covered by their sheets, by the side of the terrace wall, when a man is summoned from his home — and there is no small child about who can enter the house with a message — the caller stands at considerable distance, and yells to attract attention.

The two sexes always eat separately, even within the house. Children eat with the women, after the age of 8—9 the boy joins his father for meals.

The division of labor between the sexes is not as hard and fast as one might expect from this — man and woman share in many of the daily duties. Plowing and seeding is done only by men. Both sexes work together at harvest-time in reaping; weeding and manuring is similarly done by both. Milking is done predominantly by women, but also freely by men. Women do the cooking, sewing, and housework in general, but even with it there is no feeling of shame preventing the man from doing also this work where convenience calls for it. Inversely, plowing and seeding *must* be done by men.

In consequence of the strict separation of the sexes, the man spends most of his free time away from the home, in informal groups. The mosque is a favorite meeting place. Such groups are always open to all children (as spectators) and men of the community; they grade imperceptibly into «council» meetings (ref. p. 32) when specific topics are brought up to discussion. At special occasions (mainly in celebration of rites de passage) food is served by one member to the whole group. A particular order of serving is then observed: mullahs and their pupils eat first, as a sign of respect (toward religion more than toward the particular mullahs), second follow the main body of the group, finally the leaders, who eat much more slowly and would be embarrassed if they were to eat with the younger men, who grab and eat the food so quickly».



## RITES DE PASSAGE

The main life crises that are celebrated are marriage and death. On observances relating to birth I have no information. Circumcision is usually performed on boys between the ages of two and four, but not accompanied by particular ostentation of any kind. Some individuals are not circumcised; they usually claim it is not necessary in their case, as they «have been circumcised by the fairies». There are no rituals, nor any change of clothing etc. at puberty.

*Marriage:* is a fairly elaborate procedure — a brideprice, varying from very little to as much as one thousand Rupees (£ 100) must be paid — in any form, though only rarely in money. The girl is usually below puberty at the time of marriage; she is carried by her brother in a festive procession to the house of her husband if it is moderately close, otherwise she has to walk. The brother, sub- sidiarily the paternal cousin, carries her on his back or shoulders. In the evening, a feast is given to all present; there may be music and dancing. Two bachelors were met, who claimed to be married to fairies.

*Death:* is the occasion for the most extreme ostentation — buffalo, sheep, goats, and gallons of clarified butter are consumed by a large number of visitors. The corpse lies in state in the house, or on a bed out in the open, till all neighbors and visitors have collected. They then — in groups in the conventional order (p. 43) — eat a sumptuous meal beside or around the outstretched corpse. After the meal, the corpse is buried in Moslem fashion, but over the grave a wooden structure is then erected, elaborately carved — its size and beauty commensurate with the status of the dead. Most individuals merely have a carved post or plank erected at the head and the foot of the grave; over the graves of elders of high standing, or of saints, a square box-shaped structure of exquisitely carved planks is built around elaborate corner posts, sometimes as much as 2—3 yards high. In Kandia, a small, fairly naturalistic model of a bird is perched on the carved plank over the head of the grave. All informants denied that this feature had any special significance.

Through a pious concern for the economy of the people, and in agreement with purist Moslem ideals, the government of Swat disapproves of the more extreme forms of ostentation, and have banned the large funeral parties. None the less, I had the good fortune to witness a burial and feast with more than 100 adult male guests.

*Pagan religion:* Traditions of the pre-Moslem religion were difficult to unearth, to all appearances because they have been stamped out. Biddulph (1880, pp. 108—126) gives some information from the neighboring areas across the Indus — to what extent they are applicable to this area is unknown. Most informants agreed that there had been idols, before which the people prayed. There were priestly families in pagan times; these priests taught that there was no heaven and no hell, «and such nonsense» (cf. Afghan Kafirs (Scott Robertson, 1896) and Kalash Kafirs (own materials) where life after death is denied). A trancelike state was brought on by drinking wine, in a fashion that is still, according to rumor, occasionally followed in Darel, to the north. The use of juniper smoke as intoxicant, cited by Biddulph (1880 p. 116) was unknown to my informants.

Men in pagan times wore their hair long. A local taboo on eating fish is only slowly giving way with increased contact with Pathans.

## JAG PATHANS

The presence of an intrusive community of Pathans in Jag in the Duber valley should be mentioned.

*ORIGINS:* The group traces its origin from Charbāgh in the Swat valley from which place their ancestors fled to Alāi (across the Indus) as part of the general exodus of «Swatis» tribes resulting from the conquest of the valley by Yusufzai Pathans (ca. 15—1600 A. D.). Four generations ago, the leader of the faction which the families at present in Jag then formed within a larger community committed a murder, and the opposing faction drove them out of the village and took over their land, being the stronger of the two groups. By way of Pālas this weaker section then arrived in the



Duber valley, where they bought the Jag territory from the Kohistanis of Duber and Kandia (see footnote, p. 29).

**ECONOMY:** Jag is a small village of 120—140 houses, situated some 1000 feet above the valley bottom a few miles below Duber Fort. The steep valley side has been terraced so a considerable amount of land can be farmed; a crop, consisting mainly of maize, is raised. The property stretches as a strip up into the mountains, and includes a summer camp where much of the population, together with the animals, spend the summer from May till September.

**POLITICAL ORGANIZATION:** The population is divided into seven lineages: Mullah khel, Dingorr khel, Pible khel, Gandorr khel, Bishamorr khel, Bahádur khel, Mangia khel. The first named is the most powerful; Mangia khel is in a client relation to it. Members of all these khels are found in Alai. The seven lineages are not genealogically related.

All seven lineages have some land, though some individuals have very little, and thus also serve as tenants for the richer villagers.

The village is administered by a council (*jirga*) consisting of some twenty seniors or family heads. Of these, five are recognized as chiefs (*Malak*). The position as *Malak* is inherited, and is independent of land ownership. Two *malaks* are of Mullah khel, two of Dingorr khel, and one of Bishamorr khel. The council frequently meets in the mosque. The community is divided into two factions (*dala*), allied to the major two alliances of Kohistanis. One faction is dominated by the Mullah khel, the other by the Dingorr khel.

In addition to the farmers, there are a few representatives of the carpenter and blacksmith castes. There used also to be a barber, but he has left the community. The status as mullah and leader of prayer (*Imám*) is not tied to a separate caste, as it is among the Swat and Alai Pathans.

Their Kohistani neighbors marry the daughters of the Jag Pathans, but will not give them women in return — i. e. a caste barrier is maintained in which the Pathans of Jag are regarded as inferior in status.

The villagers still speak exclusively Pashto among themselves.

**CHANGES:** The interesting feature of the colony is the great

amount of change from characteristic Pathan customs that has taken place — assuming that the group entered with patterns and institutions similar to those found in Swat and Alai today. The economy of the group is like their neighbors' except that the pattern of transhumance is simpler. Dress and architecture is like that of the Duber valley. The organization of the council is like that of Duber — though the title *Malak* has been retained, the criterion of land ownership has been dismissed, with consequent reduction of the actual power position of the status. The whole political hierarchy from landed gentry to propertyless laborer is lacking; the village is composed of a coalition of unrelated lineages, in contrast to the Pathan system of total political control by one lineage group. The characteristic Pathan institution of the *hujra* (guest house), which is of central importance in the economic and political field, as well as serving as a men's club, has disappeared totally. Thus, under pressure of external circumstances, most of the cultural complex of the surrounding Kohistanis has been adopted, language alone remaining apparently unmodified.

## BADESHI

To complete the survey of the Indus side of Swat State, the existence of one more group of non-Pathans should be mentioned: the Badeshi, classified by Pathans as a separate people of the general Kohistan family. They are found as tenants in the Chakesar area, predominantly in two villages. According to informants, they speak their own separate language, and formerly had a wider distribution. Several persons tracing descent from this group were met with in the Swat valley, but they were now exclusively Pashto-speaking. The community is mentioned by Biddulph. Unfortunately, I had no opportunity to visit it.



## G A W R I

*Name:* Gáwri, according to all local informants, though in the literature usually given as Gárwi (Linguistic Survey of India). By the Swat Pathans, the people are known as Kohistanis, together with the other non-Pathan peoples given that name; together with the Torwális, Kohistanis of Swat Kohistan. Outside of their area, persons claiming descent from the Gáwri were unfamiliar with the ethnic name, and insisted that Kohistani was the only proper term. In Dir State, they are called Bashkári or Bashkárík (Linguistic Survey of India). Gáwri informants were unfamiliar with this term as applied to themselves, insisting it means 'person of Kashkár', i. e. a Chitrali.

*Language:* The people speak the Gáwri language, essentially similar to the Bashkárík of Dir Kohistan. It belongs to the general Kohistan, or Dardic, group of Indian languages. All (male) Gáwri appear to be bilingual; in addition to their own language they speak fluent Pashto.

*Appearance, clothing:* The Gáwri approach the Pathans very closely in clothing and appearance — they wear a tunic shirt (páre), similar to the Western type in collar and cuffs, over baggy pants (shérwál). Around their legs, however, they frequently wind narrow cloth strips (otará) till they cover the area between the ankle and the knee. The hair is frequently worn long, and many men parade large and fancy moustaches. In racial type they fall within the variations of Swat Pathans, with fairly light skin color, and average stature definitely higher than in Swat.

*Area:* The Gáwri people of Swat State occupy most of the upper-

most part of the Swat valley, from Pashmál northward. The very tops of the valleys are however not inhabited by Gáwri people; there are the summer camps of the nomadic Gujar, and, especially in Gabriál and Bahandra valley, some permanent settlements of Gujars. The Gáwri probably count some 6000 individuals.

People speaking the same language and with the same customs are also found further west, in the neighboring valleys of Dir Kohistan.

According to several informants in Kálám, a related people is also found in the Chinese Central Asian area, at a place called Khatá Khotan. This had formerly been unknown to the Gáwri, but pilgrims from Khará Khotan had recently been observed by a Gáwri in Karachi on their way to Mecca, and were recognized by their clothing and language.

*Subdivisions:* The inhabitants of the Dir and Swat Kohistan areas respectively form two main subdivisions of the Gáwri people. Within Swat, the Gáwri are further subdivided in three main communities:

(1) The formerly compact village, now more dispersed settlement area Kálám, the most important community. It supposedly numbered 1000 houses, some 40 years ago, but has since been reduced in size, containing today only about half that number.

(2) To the west, the compact village of Utrór (Utrót).

(3) To the north-east, the moderately compact village of Ushú and more scattered settlement area of Matilán.

These three communities constitute autonomous socio-political groups. Each constitutes a settlement nucleus inhabited by the total population in the winter season, and in contrast to Indus Kohistan, by a considerable portion of the population also in the summer, when the other fraction occupy scattered summer sites in the grazing area.

*History:* The area lacks any semblance of recorded history, and does not appear to be mentioned in available historical sources. I was further unable to find traditions of stories relating to outside contacts in the past which might be fixed in time. The time and circumstances of conversion to Islam were unknown.

In the last century, a vague claim to sovereignty by Chitral was dispured, first by Dir and later, after its foundation, by Swat State.



The territory was occupied by Swat some 8 years ago, but is still not incorporated into Swat State, its formal status being that of Tribal Territory, the administration of which has been delegated to the Wali of Swat.

## ECONOMY

**AGRICULTURE:** Staple crops are maize and millet, cultivated in irrigated fields, yielding one crop pr. year. Though the upper Swat valley receives more rain than the valleys draining directly into the Indus, this rain does not suffice for the crops. Extensive irrigation systems are therefore constructed, carrying water in ditches and wooden ducts from tributary streams to the cultivated areas. The main branches of the Swat river are too large, and their water level too variable, to be thus utilized.

Much of the agriculture is performed on the extensive old river terraces — artificial terracing thus becomes largely unnecessary. Usually, a low embankment is constructed to function as a retaining wall for irrigation water and rain water; only rarely is an actual terrace wall called for. The fields are plowed by bullocks — agricultural techniques in general were reported to be like those of Indus Kohistan and Swat.

**Livestock:** Domesticated animals are cow, sheep, goat, donkeys, mules, and horses. Chickens are more common than in the Indus area. Buffalos are rare.

**Seasons:** A cycle of transhumance is observed in the utilization of grazing areas; however, only a fraction of the population take part in the movement to the summer pasture areas (*bāndas*). Though there are several pasture areas, these are regarded as alternative rather than serial, depending on the character of, and expectations for, the season. In contrast to Indus Kohistan, there is daily contact in the summer between the mountain and the permanent settlement. The permanent settlements lie in the valley bottom at 6—8000 feet altitude; mountain pastures, utilized by Gāwri, apparently go no higher than 10—11 000 feet.

**Grazing and herding:** The animals are mostly permitted to wander freely. Where the pastures are close to the borders of Dir, or where large groups of nomads are found in the neighborhood, the cattle are looked after more closely. Such herding duty is divided between the households owning several cows, each such household being responsible for guarding the herd one day. Fodder is collected for the winter season — it is stored in big sheafs threaded on tall poles on the roofs of the dwelling houses.

**Environmental restrictions:** A comparison with Indus Kohistan is incomplete without the mention of environmental limitations on the possibilities of agriculture. The valley bottom lies above 7000 feet above sea level, and has a much more severe climate than the mild Indus bank at 3000 feet. Snow builds up during winter to a height of 2—3 yards, and the fields are not clear of snow till the month of May. Thus, they yield only one crop a year, compared to two crops/year along the Indus. Maize in the Gāwri area only gives a return of some 20 to 1.

Because of the necessity for irrigation, the same fields are used year after year. To prevent them from becoming exhausted, natural manure is utilized. The area for cultivation is thus limited by the amount of manure available. Since the cattle utilize mountain pastures for about half the year, only a fraction of their manure is available as fertilizer; and due to the severity of the winter, when the cattle must be maintained on fodder collected by the farmer himself in the summer season, the number of cattle any man is able to keep is limited. This vicious circle prevents the extension of the agricultural fields, and large areas of potentially productive lands thus remain unused.

**DIVISION OF LABOR:** As in Indus Kohistan, the overwhelming majority of the Gāwri population are subsistence farmers, raising their own crops and retaining the total produce for themselves.

**Tenants:** Some few individuals, however, own no land, or so little land they can not support themselves on it alone; they work as tenants (*debagāns*) on the lands of a few more wealthy people. In return for their manual labor, they receive  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the produce of the field. In addition, most tenants occupy a house belonging



to their master. In payment for it, they perform certain traditional services, such as fetching wood for fires and lighting, running errands, and maintaining the master's house in good repair.

The tenants are largely local people, partly of the same descent as the other members of the community. Owning little or no land, they can not sit in the council, and are generally looked down upon. Their number is small — in the village of Utrór, only two persons could be named who were totally without land (criminal refugees from outside), and some 3—4 more who had so little land their main subsistence came from working as tenants.

*Craftsmen:* The only specialized group of craftsmen are *smiths*. The different smith households divide the farmers among themselves on the pattern of Indus Kohistan and Swat. In return for their services they receive 12 seers grain per working plow per year (some 24 lbs). Other crafts may be the speciality of some particular local man, but are not considered a separate fulltime occupation. No caste barrier is observed between smiths, tenants, or farmers.

## POLITICAL ORGANIZATION.

*Descent groups:* As in the Indus Kohistan area, political groups among the Gáwri are largely defined by descent. Communities are conceived of as composed of several, internally segmented patrilineal descent groups (*khels*). A *khel*, as defined, should consist of all the local descendants of a named ancestor, who normally gives the name to the group. The same term, *khel*, is used for groups and their segments on all levels of segmentation.

On the lowest level of segmentation, this descent theory seems to hold true, judged by the genealogies offered by the Gáwri themselves. On the level of major segments and apical ancestors of the maximal groups, however, the traditional genealogies do not support this ideal. Pursuing this, it emerged that strangers could in fact become members of the *khels* without adoption into the kinship unit. In this context the *khels* appeared to be conceived of as political parties rather than unilineal descent groups. The dis-

crepancy did not particularly bother the informants; they insisted that the maximal units were groups of the same nature as, and homologous with, their component segments, and that it was appropriate to apply the same term to all these groups. To avoid encumbering the presentation by the use of native words, I shall in the following use the term *section* as a translation of the Gáwri word *khel*, since the system in its organizational aspect constitutes a segmentary system of groups capable of political fusion according

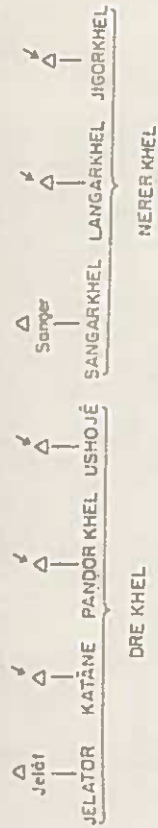


Figure 4: Composition of the two political sections of Utrór village, Gáwri area.

to a hierarchical charter of progressively more inclusive sections, and since these groups are in their nature residential, though recruited mainly by patrilineal succession.

*Genealogies:* Genealogical charters are found which relate at least some of the component parts of each section; but these show definite irregularities. The village Utrór is composed of two unrelated sections, Dre *khel* and Nererr *khel*. Dre *khel* again has four subsections, unrelated by any genealogical charter, representing the descendants of immigrants from different areas. One subsection, the Jelattor, is considered senior, since the apical ancestor Jelát was the first to settle in the area. Further segmentation divides the subsections into groups of close agnatic relatives — brothers, sons, brother's sons, and maybe a few more distantly related persons. This group again is subdivided into households, never larger than the agnatic descendants of a living man (and their wives), frequently composed of no more than an elementary family. The other main section, Nererr *khel*, is divided into three subsections, the senior being Sangar *khel*, descended from Sangar, the first settler of that section.

It might appear that this is simply a description of a system of



lineages, uniting to form compound clans. But this apparent regularity breaks down when one compares Utrór to Kálám, the main Gáwri community. Kálám, is composed of three main sections: Dre khel, Nílor, and Jafíor. Dre khel is different from the Dre khel of Utrór, the two distinct groups merely happen to have the same proper name. The name carries no meaning in Gáwri, but translates in the Pashto language, which they all speak fluently, as «Three lineages» (Three = Phsc: Dre, Gáwri:  $\lambda a$ ). Dre khel of Utrór

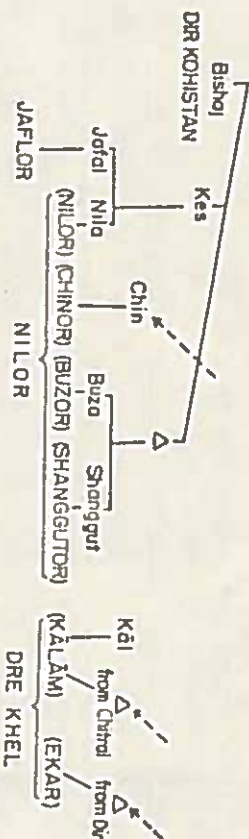


Figure 5.: Genealogy showing internal composition of the political sections in Kalam, Gáwri area.

contains, as we saw, four subsections; Dre khel of Kálám contains two such subsections. Kál is the «apical ancestor» of the group and supposedly the aboriginal inhabitant of the whole area (cf. Mythology, p. 63). His descendants, together with the descendants of an ancient refugee from Chitral, form the one subsection, called Kálám. The descendants of Ekar, a refugee from Patrak in Dir, form the other subsection of the Dre khel.

Jafíor and Nílor, the two other sections of the Kálám area, however, are related in a most extraordinary genealogical arrangement. They both trace descent from Kes, an immigrant from Dir Kohistan who after some struggle settled in one community together with Kál (cf. p. 63). The Jafíor are the descendants of his son, Jafai. The Nílor, on the other hand, consists of four subsections, descended from his son Níla, his slave Chin, and his nephews Buza and Shanggur respectively. The genealogical relationship between the brothers Jafai and Níla and their paternal cousins is thus ir-

relevant to the recognized pattern of fusion and segmentation on the political level.

Thus, of the five major political groups in the two communities recorded, three are groups compounded of several unrelated descent units. One is a simple lineage (with accretions on the lower levels of segmentation) recognizing patrilineal kinship with a subsection of an other section; and one is composed of partly related, partly unrelated subsections, one of which recognizes closer patrilineal ties to a totally separate group than to any subsection of its own group. In other words, fictitious genealogies are not constructed to relate the subsections of a political section; nor are traditional genealogies discarded when they directly contradict the political alignments of subsections into sections. None the less the organization is described by informants as patrilineal, and called by a term meaning patrilineal lineage in this and all neighboring languages. In the position and fusion of segments, the organization also appears in some contexts to operate as a lineage system. Considering all this, the significance of the traditional genealogies remains somewhat of a puzzle.

*Land ownership:* The conditions of land tenure and rules relating to the transfer of land have very direct political implications. Through cross-questioning and comparing the often contradictory statements of numerous informants, the following picture was built up.

Agricultural land is held individually; each plowed field is regarded as the private property of a particular (male) individual. The extent of his rights to alienate this land is obscure — some informants insisted that he has full freedom, but that it was a «shame» for him to sell; others referred to the limitations imposed by the Shariat. These limitations are however not systematically imposed; but an implicit limitation is imposed by virtue of the local conception of rights to land: though the land is owned individually, a specific individual can only exercise his rights to land *qua* member of a recognized, locally resident section. Fields are thus private property, and can freely be transferred within the community (where rights by kinship, and by actual contiguity of property,



defined by Shariat, are not recognized); but only recognized members of the community can hold land at all.

In the community of Kálám, where Swat State's administration has-established itself, this rule is breaking down. A jeep road comes to within three miles of Kálám, and prominent citizens of Swat have been able to buy quite extensive areas of agricultural land close to the summer bungalow recently built by the Wali of Swat. The idea that it is a «shame» to sell land to such strangers persists none the less. In the two other communities, the rule still holds true.

The non-agricultural lands, i. e. the forest and pasture areas, are the common property of the members of the component sections of each community. Members of the section are free to graze any number of animals, and may build summer quarters for themselves and their herdsmen anywhere in the territory of their section. Profits from these areas, such as rents paid by lumber merchants for the right to utilize the forest, or taxes paid by nomads for the right to utilize the pastures, are divided between the members — either by household (*lugi* = smoke) when the sum is small (*Utrór*) or more commonly (*Utrór* and Kálám) equally between all male members observing Ramadan fast (i. e. above 15 y. of age).

The relationship between local rights to land and political status is indicated in the recognized procedure for the adoption of outsiders into the community. Some informants were doubtful whether this could indeed be done today; a group of villagers in *Utrór* denied hotly that it was at all possible to be adopted into a community, and cited numerous rationalizations for this — mainly the shame involved to the political sponsor of the stranger, and the insecurity resulting for the local community: any stranger is bound to be a robber and ruffian, why else would he leave his own community? They admitted that the main sections of the community had been compounded in part from later arrivals, but that, they claimed, was only possible because «they were surely relatives». It emerged later that much of the heat generated in the argument referred to a specific recent conflict, where a nomad bandit leader had nearly been adopted, and then turned out. Informants in Kálám could more coolly describe the proper procedure:

A stranger desiring to settle must first establish a close relation to a person in the community, who can serve as his sponsor. The stranger then buys a piece of land from him. Having completed the transaction, he calls a council of all the senior men of the section to which his sponsor belongs. If they accept him, he offers a feast in which they all eat together; after the feast, he has become a member of the section, his rights to the land have been confirmed, and he is a full fledged member of the community. By virtue of his owning land, he also owns a share in the forest and pastures, in proportion to the number of males in his household.

Such a stranger then has the full political privileges of any birthright member of his section. He is constitutes an independent member of the group in that no formal ties persist between him and his «sponsor». In time, if his patrilineal descendants multiply, they will come to form one of the major subsections of his section.

Though on the contemporary level informants clung to the notion of descent as the «proper» qualification to group membership, and emphasized the shame involved in sponsoring a stranger, they were perfectly able to analyse the motives of their apical ancestors in adopting strangers into the community. In this connection the division of the community into sections was related to a notion of political balance between these sections: Kál, the original inhabitant, found himself in a position of weakness after Kes, as the leader of an other party had forced his way into the community. He therefore sought supporters, and eagerly assimilated the refugees from Chitral and Dir into his section. The idea of the section as a political party (mainly concerned with the protection of land rights) is thus dominant. The sections are built up, from their component contemporary households, by bonds both of patrilineal descent and political alliance, and no systematic attempt is made to assimilate the one type of bond to the idiom of the other.

*Political alliances:* Thus no distinction is made in Gávri organization between descent unit and political faction, a distinction particularly important among the neighboring Pathans. In the relations between the sections of the Kálám community and an intrusive



Pasho-speaking group living in contiguous settlement with Kálám, an anomalous exception is found.

This Pathan community, the Mullah khel, arrived supposedly some 2—300 years ago from the Tal-Dardial area 45 miles to the south, and are a branch of the Bimi khel segment of the Nikbi khel. The ancestor of the Mullah khel was a very learned man; he came with his family to Kálám and achieved a high reputation among the Gávri. After a while he bought land, but was *not* made a member of any particular section. He thus gained no general rights to forest and pasture areas, but was permitted to utilize a particular, limited district. He had three sons, the descendants of which form three major segments of the lineage. These three segments have then each joined one of the three sections of the Kálám community in a purely political alliance, i. e. the Mullah khel is split in three factions, each allied to a section of the local Gávri population. In this one case, the Gávri thus distinguish between a political tie (*déla*) and assimilation into a «descents» unit. Thus, the Mullah khel segments have not achieved economic fusion with their allied Gávri sections. In the utilization of their limited traditional pasture area (Désán, SW. of Kálám) each segment camps with the members of the Gávri section to which they are allied; but they have no right to utilize other areas belonging to that section.

This exception might reasonably be assumed to be modeled on similar arrangements in the Pathan area, and to have been established on the initiative of the Pathan partners in the relationship, and thus not to reveal any general feature of local Gávri political organization.

*Village councils:* The «sections» described so far have their main field of relevance in the economic sphere and defence of land rights, and operate on an informal level in politics as parties or factions. In actual administrative procedure, they are not formally recognized; the main administrative body is the village council, a formally unstructured body of the senior men of all the landholding «families» of the community. This council appears to correspond fairly closely in its form to the parallel institution in Indus Kohistan. The following account is of how it «should be» according to

informants — I am not aware to what extent contemporary practice by Swat's administration modifies this.

For the village of Kálám there is one big central council (*jirga*). It formerly met in a specific place, under a large tree on the hillside above the old mosque of Kálám. There, a flat square area, somewhat like a platform had been constructed and levelled out; long wooden benches (some eight meters long) facing the square are still found along two of its sides, with the crumbling remains of a similar bench on the third side. The council platform is called *bhag*. It is not in common use any more.

The council members (*ghyan*) each represent an «extended family» — i. e. a group larger than the household but smaller than the major subsections of the community. A council member will thus speak for himself and his brothers, brother's sons, his paternal cousins, and their sons, and rarely for a wider group than that. The specific limits of such groups appear to be determined by particular considerations, such as the size of sibling groups, the personality of the leader, etc. Only owners of land are qualified to sit in the council, and the ability to speak and argue a case well is emphasized.

In the council, members sit randomly mixed, and there is no ranking of seats — all present are regarded as equals in their capacity as council members. There is no notion that the representatives of one section should sit together on the bench along one side of the square — on the contrary, their corporative capacity as a body representing the *village* as a homogenous unit is emphasized in the mixing and equality of the council members.

The council is called by any member. He alerts his fellow members by beating a drum in the evening, whereupon they assemble the following day.

Largely the same description of the council was given in Utró. Here, however, there is no council platform, and the council is usually called informally by word of mouth, indication being given as to where it is to meet. Beating of the drum is specifically the signal of an impending attack, and serves to mobilize the whole village.

*Centrifugal tendency:* As noted above, only one of the Gávri



communities (Utrór) forms a compact village, while the two other communities are characterized by more dispersed settlement. Kálám was, however, according to informants, a large compact village as late as 40 years ago, supposedly approaching 1000 houses in size. The site of this settlement is clearly visible on the promontory at the confluence of the Gabral and Ushú rivers. Internal factionalism and feud led, however, to a reduction of population and dispersal of settlement as the external danger of attack was reduced. Centrifugal forces, parallel to those indicated in the Indus Kohistan area (p. 35), thus also seem to be operative here.

*Castes:* In contrast to Indus Kohistan, and Pathan areas to the south, it should be emphasized that the notion of caste appears to be lacking in the Gáwri area. Reciprocal marriages may be arranged between Gáwri and Pathan, between landholder and tenant, and even between farmers and the one locally defined craftsman group, the blacksmiths.

### SOLUTION OF CONFLICTS.

*Procedure:* In the solution of conflicts, the village council dominates much more than was the case in Indus Kohistan. All internal conflicts are properly the subject of settlement by the village council as a unit; the appointing of mediators is not commonly practised. Serious crimes are treated as public offences, i. e. cases are heard as the defendants vs. the village council, though the right to self-help also persists. Within the section (khel) there is no notion of common jural responsibility — none the less, the section becomes involved in many conflicts for purely strategical reasons, in the following manner:

If a man has committed a grave misdeed, he is brought as a individual before the village council, which reaches a decision — e. g. the payment of compensation, or, in default, the banishment of the culprit. The senior men of the culprit's section are represented on the council, together with the representatives of the other sections, and applaud the decision qua council members. However, the strength of their position in the council is in the last instance dependent on the

size and the economic strength of the section which they represent; thus in their own interest they plead for a mild punishment, and once the decision is reached, are eager to see that its conditions are fulfilled, so that the man will not be lost to the section-by-being banished from the village. In effectualizing the verdict of the council, the section's representatives are thus active, the more so the closer they stand to the culprit: they put pressure on the person, that he will fulfill the requirements, and may in part assist him economically to enable him to do this.

Thus, in the solution of conflicts, the segmentary system of sections does not operate, as a lineage system would, through the oppositions of segments — there is a definite conception of the village council as a body, responsible for the maintenance of law and order. But in the execution of the verdicts reached by this council, the sectional hierarchy is mobilized, by virtue of the strategic implications following from their constitution as «political parties».

*Property:* Movable property is privately owned and inherited according to Islamic law, a son and a daughter sharing in the proportions 2 : 1. Immovable property, such as land, is also held individually, and is inherited only by men, related to the deceased through male line. A man is limited in his right to alienate land (cf. p. 55). Theft is punishable, if the intruder is surprised within the home, by death, in agreement with Islamic law. If the thief escapes, or if the theft is discovered only later, the property is returned and a slight compensation is paid.

*Adultery:* is a public offence, for which the punishment is permanent exile. The aggrieved husband is, however, expected to try to kill the offender, and there can be no case raised against him if he is successful in this.

*Murder:* is also a public offence, punishable by exile — either permanent, or temporary till settlement with the bereaved family is reached. The immediate agnatic relatives have the right to revenge themselves, but only against the murderer himself; responsibility is not extended to any category of relative. Compensatory payment may be negotiated for through the village council — it is no shame for the aggrieved to forego the right to revenge and accept com-



pensation. Such blood money ranges around Rupees 1000 (£ 100) for an adult male, according to informants, but may vary according to circumstances. A woman is often given in marriage to the family who has suffered the loss.

#### RITES DE PASSAGE.

*Marriage:* Marriage takes place after maturity, and is celebrated in the following manner: The husband comes to fetch his bride in her father's house, whereupon she proceeds, accompanied by female relatives, to her new home. If he can afford it, her father provides a horse for her to ride, which then becomes the property of the newly wed couple; otherwise, the bride walks. Her father further provides the son-in-law with new clothes at marriage. One of the senior women accompanying the bride remains with her in the room set off for the new couple, and refuses to leave till the young man has bribed her with money or goods, corresponding to some £ 2 value. The following day, these same female relatives bring food for the feast celebrating the marriage.

No strict separation of men and women is observed; the women do not wear veils, and there are no restrictions on the two sexes being together.

There is no preferred spouse, and I found no particular emphasis on the value of endogamy expressed.

Widows are inherited in the family; it is a great «shame» to marry the widow of a man in an other section or descent group.

*Death:* Funerary ceremonies appear to be much less emphasized than in Indus Kohistan. The *kberat* ceremony is performed two or three days after death and burial, at which time a beast is sacrificed and the meat shared by the relatives and given to the poor of the community. The division of the property of the dead man is performed later.

The graves of prominent men are covered by elaborately carved structures, essentially constructed as roofed four-poster beds. Once such graves are constructed, they are permitted to disintegrate through the action of wind and weather, and no particular respect

is showed the graveyards. Questions on this point were dismissed with the common Pashto phrase: «We are the builders, not the protectors.»

*Circumcision* is performed on boys at early age. No puberty rituals seem to be observed, nor is there any overt sign of adulthood, other than the assumption of the Ramadan fast. There does seem to be some formalized notion of warrior status: men between the ages of 16 and 40 years appear, at least in some contexts, to be called *hádán*, a status explained as «persons wearing skin footwear, carrying the gun, who are expected to do military service for the section to which they belong». This is in contrast to the *ghyan* «the great ones», who go unarmed, are council members, and only take part in military exploits under extreme necessity.

**MYTHOLOGY** (recounted in Pashto by the Qazi (judge) of the Nilor khel) Kálám: The village has its name from Kál, the aboriginal inhabitant who emerged from a cave in the hillside above the plain where the Gabrái and Ushú rivers meet. Later Kes, with his brother's sons Buza and Shanggur, arrived from the Tal-Lamrei area of Dir Kohistan. He met Kál and inquired what the name of the place was, when he was told it was Kál-lám = Kál's town. These two then made war against each other, till Kes finally subdued Kál and settled down to farming, after which they started living together.

After some time Bishaj, his senior brother, came from Dir to bring Kes back home. Kes, being junior, did not want to be disrespectful and refuse, so he excused himself by saying he would come, but must wait till the crops matured and could be reaped. He instructed all his tenants to leave their oxen in the fields with their plows when they came to have their morning meal. One day Bishaj suddenly discovered an ox unattended in the field; he sprang up and said: «Look, your oxen will be hurt, they are loose in the field!» But Kes merely answered: «No, dear brother, don't bother; this is not Lamrei, these are my fields, and all will be well.» (i. e. the Kálám fields are flat and rockless, there are no terrace walls that the oxen might fall off, and no large rocks that might ruin the plows). Bishaj then



became ashamed, and left for Dir without informing his brother.

Both Kes and Kál were Moslems. Kes' sons, Jafal and Nila, are the ancestors of the two sections Jaflor and Nilor; the descendants of Buzor and Shanggut joined Nilor, as did the descendants of Kes' slave-Chin. Kál, being weaker, built up his section, Dre khel, from numerous sources: mainly by refugees from Kashkár (Chitral), assimilated into the Kalam subsection, and the descendants of Ekar, a refugee from Patrak in Dir.

## TORWALI

*Name and language:* The Torwáli are a linguistic and political group inhabiting the Swat valley from Laikot down to, and including, Bahrein, called by the Torwális Baraniál. Their border towards the neighboring Pathans corresponds to the ecologic limits between the area of one crop, and the area where it is possible to raise two crops pr. year; the Torwáli villages are situated in the Swat river gorge from this border and northwards nearly to the Gáwri area. The population may total some 2000 households, i. e. something on the order of 10 000 individuals. The Torwális live in compact, moderately large villages (up to ca. 600 houses) mainly on the West bank of the Swat river; they are completely incorporated in Swat State and administered by its officials. This incorporation was achieved in 1922. All the Torwális I met were fluently biligual, speaking Pashto as well as their own language. Appearance and clothing is very similar to the neighboring Pathans. The following material was collected from informants in Bahrein (Baraniál).

### ECONOMY.

*Land ownership:* Agricultural land is held as individual property, as among the Gáwri; the owner is free to sell his land to any fellow villager, and apparently to any fellow Torwáli from other villages, but not to strangers and total outsiders. Pasture areas and forest are the common property of the village; village members may freely utilize the forest for firewood and housebuilding, and may graze an unrestricted number of animals in the pasture areas. Income from



the forest is divided, mostly in equal shares for each household (*haji*), in one village between households in proportion to the amount of land they own.

*Division of labor:* The Torwali have a more complex system of craft specialization than the Gawri. This system is very similar to that of their Pathan neighbors, and craftsman families trace descent from Pathans, mostly in the Alai area,<sup>1)</sup> and speak Pashto as their home language.

Craftsman status and skill is transmitted from father to son, and is thus associated with a hereditary group of practitioners. Such a group is called a *goum* (see p. 36), and is ideally endogamous. Torwalis will never give their daughters to them, and normally do not take wives from them. The marriage barrier between the different craftsman groups may be more hypothetical, but is supported by practical considerations, since the daughter of a fellow craftsman is already trained in the skills appropriate for the wife of such a specialist, and also by the general Moslem preference for family endogamy. Particularly among the barbers, where the male and female role are strongly complementary in function, caste endogamy is strictly observed. Since they constitute inherited occupational groups, and involve marriage restrictions (though permitting hypergamy), these *goums* may, as in the case of Indus Kohistan, be regarded as groups of the caste type, and will in the following be referred to as castes.

The main craftsman castes are carpenters, blacksmiths, weavers, and barbers. There is no clear hierarchical ordering of these groups, though I had the impression of a vague ranking on a descending

1) This may be due to a slight confusion; it may be more properly *relationship* with Pathans in Alai that is traced. When the Yauwzai lineages, now dominant in the Pasho territories of the Swat valley, spread into their present area, they replaced the previously dominant Swati Pathans. Most of these fled across the Indus, and conquered and settled in Alai and Hazara; the craftsman lineages in Kohistan are probably mostly collateral lines of these, who fled directly to the Kohistan areas from Swat, but retain their traditional association with lineages now residing in Alai.

scale in the order enumerated. As a group, they stand distinctly below the Torwali, agricultural population.

Each craftsman has, as among the Pathans and Kohistanis of the Indus area, a defined clientele, for which he performs the traditionally required services and receives a traditional yearly payment. The *carpenter* receives 16 seers grain (one seer is roughly equivalent to 1 kg.)/house/year; the *blacksmith* receives 16 seers/working plow (bullock pair)/year. These two are tied to political subgroups; by being a member of a certain political unit within the village, a farmer is committed to use and pay the carpenter and blacksmith of that unit. The *barber* is given 20—24 seers of grain/house/year; he is not attached to political units, and the head of a household may seek the services of any barber he wishes. Finally *weavers* have no standard arrangement for clientele or payment; they sell to, or barter with, either local farmers or traders in Bahrain or other market towns. Most weavers are called Kashmiris; they also take work in the forests, or occasionally as tenants.

Craftsmen have no formalized political powers, and can not sit in the village council.

*Tenants* are utilized in agriculture by the wealthier persons who own large fields; a rich man may employ 3—4 tenants in his fields. The tenants are mostly Torwalis — poor people of the same descent groups as the resident landowners. They constitute only a small element in the total population — in the village of Bahrain they were estimated to count 15 houses, compared to 500 houses of landholding farmers. They receive  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the crop in return for their labor.

An interesting circular argument was advanced to explain their political position: land ownership is not a prerequisite for having a vote in the village council, but tenants have in fact no vote there, «because the head of a tenant household represents so few people, he has so few sons». When I argued that poor people might indeed have many children, the answer was that then the father would not remain a tenant — to be a tenant is a great shame — his many sons would work for him, either in the village, or in Swat proper, or even in Peshawar or Karachi, so he would be able to buy land and



become a landowner. A prime value is put on holding land; thus a man representing a large enough family to sit in the village council would above all utilize these human resources to acquire land for himself.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

*Descent groups:* The Torwáli are, as other Kohistanis, divided into segmentary units recruited internally by patrilineal descent. These descent groups are called *khels*. In the extent to which these *khels* correspond to actual lineage groups, the Torwáli appear to be somewhat intermediate between the Gáwri and the Kohistói of the Indus area.

Bahrein is inhabited by two main groups, each internally segmented as follows:

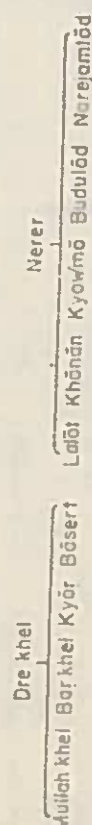


Figure 6.: Composition of the two main political sections of Bahrein (Baramal) village, Torwáli area.

The Dre khel and Nererr are also found in other Torwáli villages, as well as two other major groups: Jagerr and Ushāt.

The Torwáli as a unit do not appear to claim a common ancestor peculiar to them as a tribe; the four major groups have different histories. I did not encounter the tradition, met with in Indus Kohistan (cf. p. 26) that they should all be descended from a younger son of Zuqum. The major segments of each group are similarly separate, though they have a common history as a group and will, when pressed, claim «relationship» to each other. Actual genealogies were given only for the major segments. The system might thus be described, in the terminology common for Africa, as a system of four dispersed clans, each composed of a variable number of local lineages.

The following genealogy from the Barr (Great) khel of the Dre khel illustrates the differences in the nature of the ties between the units on the several levels of segmentation:

Barr khel is descended from Jumrali, who lived in Indus Kohistan. His SoSoSo Lamai fled from Indus Kohistan in an attempt to escape conversion to Islam by Akhund Bába, together with the other lineages within Dre khel. The country now occupied by them was empty and uninhabited then; they settled there together and were later converted by Akhund Bába when he found them in the Swat river valley. The informant, an old man, belongs to the fourth descending generation from this convert. All members of Barr khel can trace descent from the apical ancestor through a variable number of generations; this carries their family line back to a time when they lived in a different area, the Indus Kohistan. The Barr khel is a segment of the larger Dre khel. There is no named ancestor for this whole group; but they have a common history as a group from as far back as their component descent lines are traced. The Dre khel is one of four major units within the Torwáli nation or ethnic group; an other of these units, Nererr, has lineages coresiding in Bahrein village with those of Dre khel. The Nererr are similarly derived from Indus Kohistan, but arrived independently to the Swat valley. Together, the residents of Bahrein village own common pasture and forest rights. Finally, all four major units of the Torwáli share, in addition to closely parallel institutions of every kind, and the Torwáli language, a common political institution, as will be seen below, and are thus capable of corporate action as a single unit.

*Administration:* The council is the major administrative institution. Today, the State of Swat has its own administrative officers, appointed by the Wali, responsible only to him, and exclusively Pathan. They utilize village councils in an advisory capacity only. The following description is that given by older informants of the autonomous Torwáli institutions as they supposedly existed before annexation in 1922.



Each village had its separate council (*jirga/jirak*) for internal village affairs; but political activity centered around the central council for all Torwālis. This had political authority over the whole group; it used to meet in Zór Baranial (Old Bahrein) a mile SW of the present Bahrein village, and counted some 4—500 members. It had no platform or other particular place of meeting, but used to meet in the open. Employed by the council was an agent/messenger (*kotwāl*); he was a poor man with no vote in the council, and his main duty was to notify the council members, distributed among the villages in the twenty mile gorge occupied by the Torwāli, when the council was to meet.

The council members (*malak*) met as representatives of their own households and those of brothers, sons, and possible other close agnatic relatives. There were no formal restrictions to candidacy, other than that of being a Torwāli by descent; but as noted above, all members were in fact owners of land. Being the representative of a very small kinship group, there were no formalities of election as council representative for the family. All the representatives were equal in their capacity as council members; no distinctions of seniority between lineages or segments were recognized.

In the council, the major descent groups functioned as political units or «parties»; in explaining the system, the informants emphasized that the distinction between lineage (*kbel*) and faction or political party (*dala*), fundamental to the functioning of councils among the neighboring Pathans, was not found among the Torwāli. Each descent group was characterized by political solidarity when any members was threatened from without. Thus, in Bahrein, the Dre kbel and Nerer kbel represented two politically distinct and frequently opposed groups. The unity of the descent group is similarly expressed in the traditional sling fights between groups of boys, in connection with celebrating the two *Ids*, the major religious festivals of the Islamic year. While among Pathans villages fight against each other on these occasions, the groups traditionally opposed among the Torwālis are the descent groups.

## SOLUTION OF CONFLICTS:

*Inheritance*: Movable property is inherited according to Islamic law, daughters receiving their proper share. Immovable property, i. e. agricultural land and houses, can only be held by males. Sons usually divide the property of their father a year or so after his death. The sons share equally in land. The paternal house goes to the *youngest* son. His is also the responsibility for the maintenance of the mother, if she survives the father.

*Adultery*: is punishable by death, for both the wife and her lover, by the hand of the husband or his immediate relatives.

*Murder*: leads to blood revenge, or compensation. Revenge devolves on the close agnatic relatives of the deceased. It is preferably directed against the murderer himself, but may alternatively be taken on the murderer's brother, father, paternal uncle, or paternal cousin, but never on a relative beyond that degree. If compensation is sought rather than revenge, this is arranged by the central council, which arrives at a suitable sum, ranging around Pak. Rupees 500 for an adult male.

## RITES DE PASSAGE:

*Marriage*: Torwālis will not give their daughters in marriage to the craftsmen groups, but may on occasion take wives from them. There are no restrictions on marriage with the neighboring Pathans of landowning or economically successful tenant groups.

A quite high brideprice is paid to the father of the girl, up to Pak Rupees 1000 according to informants. Out of this sum the father is expected to provide the daughter with a dowry, consisting of a buffalo, quilted blankets, and household utensils. He also provides the son-in-law with a new suit of clothes.

The husband leads the procession to fetch the bride in her home; she is carried in a covered palanquin (*dōli*) in Pathan fashion. The bride's father gives a feast; so does the groom's father on arrival at the groom's house. There is much merrymaking and use of professional male dancers who may on occasion dress as women.



Marriage takes place after puberty, usually at the age of 18—20 for women and 20—40 for men.

*Death:* Two or three days after the death, alms are distributed — sometimes as much as 100 or 200 Rupees — and a sacrifice is made (*kberat*) in honor of the dead. The graves of council members (*maluks*) are decorated with elaborate carvings.

*Pagan religion:* As otherwise in Kohistan, very little memory of the old pagan religion appeared, at least on the surface, to have been maintained. On old informant confided to me in a hoarse whisper that his pagan ancestors had worshipped idols, representing the chief-ancestor *Dara*, and referred to a old Buddhist rock sculpture in a Pathan district as an example of these idols. Trance and ecstasy was brought about by excessive drinking of wine (*sheráb*). It was generally agreed that such wine was still produced in Dárel, to the north of Indus Kohistan.

## GUJARS

The Gujars constitute an intrusive lowland Indian population, speaking a language reminiscent of Panjabi. They are found in the Swat valley in all degrees of assimilation, from truly nomadic pastoralists to Pashto-speaking sedentary shepherds and tenants, called Gujar by reason of descent only. In Swat Kohistan, two main types are found: (1) large numbers of nomadic herders utilizing the high valley and mountain pastures in the summer season and spending the winter in Buner or Peshawar District, and (2) scattered permanent settlements of Gujar agriculturalists, either associated with Kohistani villages, or in separate communities. These latter communities are found mainly above Utrór in the tributaries to the main valley, and between Kálám and the Torwál area, along the Swat river.

*Settled communities:* A few informants were interviewed in the Gujar, Gújri-speaking settlements Pashmál and Laikot in the upper Swat valley, between the Gáwri and Torwáli areas.

*Origins:* The families in question came «long ago» from Alai, across the Indus. The land was then empty; they claimed it, cleared the jungle, and settled as agriculturalists. Later a few Mians (descendants of Saints) and smiths, of Pathan origin, joined the community. The farmland, as well as the surrounding forest, thus belongs to the Gujar villages; for the right to utilize high mountain pastures, however, the people pay tax to the Torwáls.

*Economy:* The villages are small, on the order of 50—60 houses; a crop of mainly maize, as well as some millet, is raised on roughly terraced land. A simple pattern of transhumance is followed whereby the cattle and a part of the population spend some 4 months of the summer in mountain pastures, while the whole population resides in the village in the other 8 months of the year. Most inhabitants are farmers, working their own fields; a few more prosperous men employ tenants (*dehqáns*) to do a majority of the labor, for which they receive  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the crop. Women do less agricultural work than among Kohistanis, who are looked down upon for the way they utilize female labor in agriculture — a poor woman may, among the Gujars, do some weeding and similar light work, but only when her husband is fully employed otherwise. Agricultural techniques were reported to be in every detail like that of the Kohistanis. The only specialist regularly employed is the blacksmith. He is paid on a set scale by all members of the community in return for the necessary services: at harvest-time he receives 20 seers (40 lb) pr. plow, and 8 seers from houses not working a plow of their own.

*Political organization:* The Gujar population is made up of a number of local, mutually unrelated patrilineal descent groups: Tota khel, Dora khel, Jagar khel, Kana khel. These descent groups are not found any other place, are not localized in wards in the village, and their relevance to internal organization appears to be limited. Administrative decisions are made by a village council of informal composition — in important cases, somewhere about 80 senior men might collect and discuss the matter in question. Some of these men would represent more than their own household, i. e. would speak also for a son, a brother, etc.; but no one would represent a particularly large group. Since annexation by Swat State



in 1922, such councils have had only advisory functions. The factional dual alliance system permeating the whole area is also present here, and cross-cuts ethnic and descent groups. In former times, the two communities are supposed to have been dominated by the neighboring Torwali population, through the medium of this alliance system.

## TRADITIONS OF CENTRALIZED STATES

As mentioned elsewhere (App. I), traditions have been maintained among the Kohistani of Indus Kohistan of a former unified political organization centering in the Kandia valley. Similar traditions of former kingdoms are met with among the tribes on the E. bank of the Indus, who at present have an acephalous political organization (Biddulph 1880 p. 16, Stein 1928 pp. 7ff). Such a change within a stationary population *from* a centralized *to* a decentralized form of organization based on descent, might appear highly questionable; in the Middle East, centralized political rule usually results in the irreparable destruction of descent organizations. On the other hand, the various Kohistani communities give an invariable impression of looseness in structure, disintegration and local variability, in part abandonment of fields and loss of ancient engineering skills (Stein 1928 pp. 10, 12; also above p. 15) characteristically summarized by Biddulph (1880, p. 164) under the heading «degeneration».

Since available historical material is so limited, a broader ethnological viewpoint is called for in a discussion of this historical question. The Kohistanis of Indus and Swat Kohistan speak languages of the larger Dardic language family (Linguistic Survey of India 1927) in neighboring areas to the East and North are culturally and historically related peoples of this language family. While the Kohistanis are at present characterized by acephalous organizations of the types described above, these related peoples in Chitral-Yasin-Gilgit are organized in small, centralized states. These states have a pattern of organization which, through a process of breakdown,



might produce groups with political organizations of the type found in Kohistan. It is the thesis of this chapter that Kohistani traditions of former kingdoms may be historically correct; that these kingdoms were probably organized on the basic-pattern found in the states to the North; and that these historical considerations are relevant to an understanding of certain features of the present political and social organization in Kohistan.

Today the distribution among Dardic peoples of the two basic types of organization, the centralized and the acephalous, is correlated with ecologic and physiographic features. The Kohistan area is extremely mountainous with narrow, short and steep V-shaped valleys and very restricted alluvium; the Indus itself flows WNW-ward in a narrow fissure, and breaks southward through the mountains in a deep gorge. To the North, parallel to the WNW course of the Indus and extending further Westward is a broader, low strike valley between the Karakoram-Hindukush range and the westward extension of the Himalayas into Kohistan; in this zone one finds broader, U-shaped valleys with extensive alluvium. This land is utilized for agriculture and thus offers a basis for a larger concentration of population in the more fertile districts; the population is organized in states unifying larger regions under a central, autocratic government. These states include, from West to East: Chitral, Mastuj (now included in Chitral), Yasin, and Gilgit. Biddulph (1880) gives considerable information on these areas and their dynasties. The following material on the traditional organization of Chitral State was collected during a brief visit to Chitral in 1954, in part from my kind hosts of the Shah family, the traditional Araliqus of Chitral, in part from Hissar-ul-Mulk, Governor of Drosh, and sometime pretender to the throne.

Chitral (in Swat and Dir usually referred to as Kashkar), which also includes the sometimes independent area of Mastuj, has a population of approximately 100 000, and was till 1949 a centralized, semi-autonomous state under the autocratic control of a *Mehtar*. In connection with political changes following on the partition of British India, Chitral has now become a constitutional monarchy under the supervision of a Political Agent appointed by the govern-

ment of Pakistan. The following pertains to the traditional organization.

The rulers (*Mehtars*) were recruited from a dynastic family, the Kator, tracing descent from the Moghul emperors. There were no specified rules of succession — on the death of a *Mehtar*, the country entered a period of anarchy, where all his sons and possible surviving brothers competed for the throne till one pretender had either murdered all his rivals, or gained a decisive military victory and control of the country. The royal cemetery in Chitral bears mute witness of these struggles, with its graves where five, seven, even upwards to ten brothers of a successful *Mehtar* are buried together in one grave. The complications connected with one such incident of succession are documented in Robertson (1899).

Supporting the ruling *Mehtar* was a developed bureaucracy with a number of officers, occupying hereditary positions. Political and administrative life centered around the *mabrecka* — receptions in the audience room of the *Mehtar's* palace, where he, surrounded by prominent chiefs and administrative officers, made his decisions public, granted favors or disgraced, dismissed, or condemned people, all in complex system of traditional regalia and idiom.

The important features of this organization in the present context are: (1) the feudal organization, operating totally independent of any form of currency, and (2) the degree to which this highly bureaucratic and centralized formal organization co-existed with, and actually operated through, a tribal and in part acephalous descent organization in the districts.

(1) The whole state was organized through an association of specific duties and responsibilities with particular areas and plots of land. As land was the only source of wealth, all persons could thus be categorized in terms of the duties associated with the particular fields of land that they were utilizing. All land belonged, in the final instance, to the *Mehtar* (literally: «owner»), and the duties associated with any specific piece of land were to be regarded as payment, in service or produce, for temporary usufruct rights to that land.

Thus, in the central village of Chitral, the different bureaucratic



officers were given traditionally defined houses and estates in payment for their services — or, one might equally legitimately say: by virtue of occupying a specific estate, the occupier was required to serve in the bureaucracy in a particular capacity. The estates were inherited from father to son, or in lieu of sons by another the maintenance of travelling officials of the state or the Mehtar and as the ultimate owner of the land he had the right (and often the power) to evict anyone at any time.

In the rest of the country, tenure was even more firmly associated with patriline; and duties pertained mainly to local administration, the maintenance of travelling officials of the state or the Mehtar himself, labor for the government, or payment of grain to the Mehtar's household. Each village was administered by a village headman (*charvelu*) and his assistant (*charbo*), whose responsibility it was to know the duties of each household in the village and who was in charge of seeing that all such tenancy requirements were satisfied. These duties could be wonderfully specific and complex: one field required the payment of no more than one goat and seven chickens to a travelling official no oftener than semi-annually, the next was associated with the duty to keep the Mehtar's own fields free of crows, the third with catching and training hawks and falcons for the Mehtar, a fourth with one month's labor *pr.* year, etc. Further more, a complex pattern of sub-infeudation was developed, whereby each larger estate was again subdivided and leased out as a miniature of the state system, but with duties to the estate-holder and not to the Mehtar.

(2) Larger district administration was, till the more recent period, in the hands of hereditary noble families of locally dominant lineages, unrelated to the dynasty except by hypergamy, and holding land and position on formally the same type of tenancy terms as the central officials. Such chiefs none the less had very considerable power by virtue of their military control of local districts and their inhabitants, and the constant danger to the Mehtar that they might swing their support to a son, or other person of the dynasty, and precipitate a rebellion against the person of the ruling Mehtar. Thus large descent groups remained locally intact and functioning.

under the leadership of one or several nobles of their own lineage, in spite of the centralized form of government. The centralized system showed a high degree of tolerance and adaptability, maintaining the same formal pattern both where autocratic control by the Mehtar was extreme, and where his overlordship was extremely tenuous.

This organization is by Biddulph fitted into a wider Indian frame of reference, and he describes it in terms of castes, each caste having a defined position in the economic and political field. One can however readily see that the system is a classically pure example of a feudal organization, and operates as a system of administration, as well as on the inter-personal level, totally independently of any pervasive concept of caste. Members of a descent group can freely occupy different positions in the hierarchy and at the same time maintain their genealogical connections as a group, and patterns of marriage have no necessary relevance to the system. As a matter of fact, marriage relations carry the same hierarchical connotations in Chitral as among the Kohistanis: women may pass upwards, whereas a man in high status would not give his daughter to a man of lower status. There is, however, among many of the lineages and «tribes» of Chitral a dislike for marriage with close relatives of any kind, and a tendency toward local group exogamy.

The case with which descent groups may be incorporated into the system — retaining their descent organization — is evidenced by the numerous refugee communities scattered through the territory of the state: Red Kafirs, Gilgits, and various Kohistanis. They maintain their descent organization and are allotted districts in which to pursue their livelihood; while the feudal obligations pertaining to the lands are distributed in conformity with their internal political organization.

The pattern of organization exemplified by Chitral appears to be an ancient one. It is found also in the Yasin-Gilgit area, and apparently among the Borishaski-speaking peoples of Nager and Hunza where the ruler also has ritual functions associated with rain and first fruits ceremonies etc. (Lorimer 1939 p. 239 ff.) The Kator rulers of Chitral have a tradition that they took over the form



of administration directly from the dynasty preceeding them (Biddulph 1880, pp. 35, 63).

If the Kohistani traditions of former centralized states are seen on the background of the preceding material, they become less puzzling or improbable. The structural implications of a centralized kingship of this type for the political organization on the descent group level are limited, and a change from centralized to acephalous organization appears perfectly feasible. There are in fact historical cases illustrating this, though the available material is far too limited to permit analysis of the processes involved. The district of Ponyal, usually controlled by Gilgit but sometimes conquered by Yasin and/or Chitral, also has a brief history as an independent state. In that period, it first reverted to a «republican» form of organization, i. e. what has been called on acephalous organization in the present discussion, later to be briefly governed by an independent ruler of Darel origin (Biddulph 1880 p. 31). Stein (1928 pp. 1, 16—29) gives a slightly fuller account of a series of political changes in the Tangir and Darel valleys. During the considerable political turmoil leading up to and surrounding the British occupation of Chitral in 1895, a member of the Khushwakhtre dynastic family, Pakhtun Wali,<sup>1)</sup> was expelled from his lands in Yasin and sought refuge in Tangir. Tangir had at that time a population of some 5000 inhabitants, organized in an acephalous political system similar to that of other Kohistani communities (Biddulph 1880 pp. 12—3). Through intrigue and political acumen, Pakhtun Wali managed to gain control of the valley and proclaim himself ruler (*Raja*). He then quickly expanded his territory to include Darel and a few smaller Kohistani communities, all of which territory he apparently ruled with an iron hand as a centralized state. In 1917, however, the people of Tangir revolted, Pakhtun Wali was killed, and the community reverted to an acephalous political organization. Pakhtun Wali's family fled to the Kandia valley, and later to Swat Kohistan where they now reside near Bahrin.

These historical fragments illustrate how the shift between centralized and acephalous organizations of the types described here

<sup>1)</sup> Briefly mentioned by Robertson (1899, pp. 37, 68).

are simple and reversible, and also suggest some of the factors involved in determining the ease with which centralized government may be maintained in different Kohistani communities. Two factors are apparent, one economic and one strategic. Economically, the different valleys may be classified on a gradient from the larger and more fertile, permitting larger concentration of population and producing some surplus, exemplified by Chitral and Gilgit, to the economically marginal and restricted environments exemplified by the smallest Kohistani valleys. The strategic factor of degree of physical isolation and defensibility is roughly congruent with the economic gradient. It is readily seen, and understood, that the larger, heavily populated valleys, more difficult to defend, form the cores of independent centralized states. The more marginal the environment, the greater the strain on a centralized organization — from occasional revolutions in Yasin-Ponyal, to severe stresses during the temporary period of centralized rule in Tangir-Darel, and finally to no contemporary cases of centralized rule in the small valleys of Kohistan.

The Kandia valley was the supposed center of the former Kohistani state on the West bank of the Indus; Tangir, Darel, and Chilas have traditions of separate states. Of the Kohistan areas surveyed, Kandia was characterized by the largest continuous inhabited area and the greatest population. Though in no way comparable to the Chitral or Gilgit valleys, and considerably more restricted even than the three other traditional Kohistani «centers» mentioned, it is still the valley of Kohistan West of the Indus that offers the best ecologic basis for centralized rule. Tradition thus locates the center in the a priori most probable place.

The degree of cohesion in a centralized organization obviously depends upon innumerable cultural variables. Tradition places the old kings in pagan times, and it seems reasonable to invest them with central magical and ritual functions, as suggested by functions retained by the Mir of Hunza (Lorimer 1939 p. 232, 293). Thus, though stories of centralized kingdoms in Kandia, and otherwise in Kohistan, might appear hardly creditable considering economic, political, and religious factors there today, there would seem no



reason to doubt their authenticity on the background of the types of considerations introduced above. The general breakdown and disappearance of kingship in Kohistan is then seen as a result of conversion to Islam, and the consequent loss of centralized ritual and magical institutions, supporting such kingship.

Our theoretical understanding of the processes of social and cultural change is too limited for this to have any direct bearing on an analysis of social organization in the area today, some eight generations, or maybe 250 years, after the supposed breakdown of centralized kingship. None the less, the perspective should lead to slightly lowered expectations regarding the coherence and internal consistency of Kohistani rules and practices. As noted above (p. 75), the lack of pattern and structure — and of «vigour» — in Kohistani life is subjectively striking, and professionally frustrating. This lack is characteristic both of Swat Kohistan — where ethnic diversity of origins in local groups and the most severe ecology combine to make the effect most striking — and of Indus Kohistan: in both areas, the social organization seems labile and wrought with unreconciled contradictions in conception, yet, in part sophisticated in its ideals and practices, e. g. in the judicial and policy-making procedures of the village councils. These contradictions, the lability of the organizations, and the local variability between closely related local communities, is best understandable, though yet not analysable, on the background of such historical considerations as those sketched above.

## CONCLUSION

It might be useful to summarize some of the major patterns of organization described above, so as to bring out certain characteristics relatively peculiar to Kohistani social systems. Firstly, *economic organization* deserves some attention. Indus and Swat Kohistan constitute a refuge area, in that the environment is restricting and economically unattractive, and communications are very difficult. The valleys and gorges are generally short, deep, and narrow, cult. The valleys and gorges are generally short, deep, and narrow, surrounded by mountains, with local variations in altitude from 2000 to 18 000 ft. Land potentially suited for agriculture is extremely limited. The Kohistani adaptation to this environment takes the form of a mixed economy with little individual specialization, pursued through an extreme development of transhumance. Agriculture, dependent on artificial terracing and irrigation, is practiced in the valley bottoms, while cattle, sheep, goats, and water buffalo are herded. In winter, the people are concentrated in the valleys, while in the spring, summer, and autumn seasons they mostly abandon their fields to follow the herds up to the mountain pastures in a pattern of vertical nomadism or transhumance, sometimes through a series of as many as five different seasonal camps varying in altitude from 3000 to 14 000 ft. In the course of the seasonal cycle, different ecologic belts are thus utilized, and the size and organization of local groups varies regularly from compact winter villages of more than thousand inhabitants, to tiny hamlets by the summer pastures, accommodating no more than ten-twelve individuals.

The population is largely composed of independent elementary families of agriculturalists. The only groups of specialists of any im-



portance are (1) a semi-endogamous caste of smith/carpenters, and (2) a small group of farm laborers. No money or other standard of exchange is used in any type of transaction; these two groups of specialists receive each a traditionally stipulated fraction of the crop in return for their services.

*Social organization* was given most attention in this brief survey. Essentially, social groups appear to be formally defined according to one of two principles: that of patrilineal descent, and that of territorial contiguity. Both of these principles are applied in segmentary fashion to produce a hierarchy of groups, organizing maximum populations of 2—10 000 individuals.

The descent organization constitutes a hierarchy of segments, usually, but not necessarily, supported by complex genealogies. There seem to be generally three levels of segmentation with major recognized relevance, roughly corresponding to (1) the extended family, (2) major segments (or lineages) composed of several or numerous related extended families, and (3) whole lineages or clans, composed of several major segments.

Territorial contiguity is utilized in social organization through the constitution of administrative councils of all landowners of a territory. This again is a segmentary system, with at least two levels of segmentation: (1) local districts, alternatively wards, and (2) larger geographical areas, e. g. a tributary to the Indus, composed of several local districts, alternatively a whole compact village community, composed of several wards.

These two sets of groupings run parallel, but do not normally coincide. Yet, there is no clear separation of their respective fields of relevance. The resulting discongruity constitutes the major problem in the social organization of these areas. The following discussion attempts to summarize the articulation between the two sets of groups, and the institutional contexts in which they express themselves.

The agnatic lineage is of central importance in Kohistani organization. It is abstractly recognized as a type of grouping (*khel* = lineage); and different lineages, and their segments, have proper names, often that of their distinguishing apical ancestor. The prac-

tical relevance of this type of grouping is, however, somewhat peculiar. It is of major importance in the economic field. It has only marginal relevance to conflicts involving murder and revenge. In the political field the lineages express themselves only as factions in the context of the non-agnatically constituted administrative councils. — These statements should be amplified.

*Relevance of lineage in economic field.* Rights to land are inherited patrilineally and can only be held by men. Kohistani economy depends both on agriculture and pastoralism; thus both agricultural fields and pastures are of major importance. Pasture rights are generally held collectively by the maximal political unit, and are subdivided, and periodically redistributed, among its component agnatic lineages and further among their segments. Pasture areas are utilized through a pattern of transhumance. Thus the group that co-resides through the winter in a compact village, breaks up into its component agnatic groups and segments as it migrates in the summer to the mountain pastures. But the lineage segment that spends one summer season in one series of mountain hamlets will, through a rotating allotment between segments, spend an other summer season in a different sub-area. What is transferred from father to son is thus not the rights of pasture in a particular area, but lineage and segment membership, with consequent ambulating rights to utilize different tribal pasture areas.

A similar system of periodic reallocation was formerly practiced in regard also to all agricultural land. The rights to a certain fraction of the tribal agricultural land was transferred from father to son, but no rights to particular fields; thus individuals received their agricultural land only through their agnatic lineage, and for stipulated periods. Most plowed land has now become permanently allotted to individuals, though occasional areas remain that are still reallocated in the traditional fashion. But even where individual property rights have become established, conflicts over the borders of fields, and irrigation rights, have remained a major concern of the larger agnatic groups.

Thus the agnatic lineage plays a central role in respect to property and economic life: it regulates inheritance; serves as a cor-



porate group in the protection of property rights in agricultural land; is a joint shareholder in, and also the further distributor of, pasture rights and habitation sites for the summer, as well as some agricultural fields; and consequently constitutes a neighbor group, at least in the summer season, a group for cooperative herding and transportation, etc. It thus regulates and shares jointly in many privileges, and plays dominant role in daily life.

*Relevance of lineage in revenge.* With respect to joint sharing of jurat responsibilities, as contrasted to privileges, the agnatic lineage is of far less importance. Most offences are regarded as public offences, in that the whole community, through its village council, considers and determines the guilt, and the actor is held individually responsible for his action. The right to blood revenge is recognized, as privilege of the bereaved. It devolves on the closest agnatic relative — i. e. on he who inherits from the dead person. Revenge is directed against the murderer himself, and is transferred from him only if he is out of reach, and then only to his very closest agnatic relatives. Thus, though there is evidence of patrilineal transfer of the privilege to revenge, and of the responsibility for murder, this is limited to very close agnates and is not the concern of the larger lineage.

*Village councils and lineages.* The main area of articulation of the descent organization and the organization based on territorial criteria is in administration. All matters of public concern are properly the subject of discussion and decision in a village or district council. Such councils are composed of all, or at least representatives of all, the landowning peasants of a traditionally and geographically delimited area. All members of the council have an equal right to speak. Unanimity is unnecessary, though desirable; a majority decision, or more properly general acclamation, suffices. Thus, in the formal constitution of the council, membership is defined by a purely territorial criterion, and descent or membership in an agnatic lineage is irrelevant. However, a «parliamentary» procedure like this can hardly be imagined to operate without some development of organized parties or factions. In Kolhistan, at any rate, the procedures and type of discussion presuppose the existence of a further, media-

ting system of groups. This system is supplied, in the main, by the descent organization. Agnatic kinship is utilized to form coalitions between council members, and thus the agnatic lineages emerge as factions within the village council. However, such more or less spontaneous, or at least informal, coalitions and factions do not follow the genealogical alignments completely; friendship, matrilineal kinship, and political opportunism all appear to play a role, and the expression of the descent organization as factions in the territorial councils is thus obscured and complicated in numerous ways.

One further complication arises. Since land ownership is traditionally associated with lineage organization in somewhat varying ways in the different communities, any territorial group should properly constitute an agnatic descent group, and territorial criteria of membership should be freely translatable to the idiom of lineage membership. This circularity can never be fully realized, and the resulting discrepancies are evidenced in the incongruity between genealogies and actual descent groups, and in the various problems of becoming adopted as a member of the community, discussed in the body of the text.







MYTHOLOGY, INDUS KOHISTAN.

Rivalry between lineages, their claims to status, and their relation to other groups is mainly discussed in the context of mythology, and some of this semi-history might be offered as an illustration of the mode in which such claims and thoughts are framed. The time and circumstances of conversion to Islam figure prominently.

Relating to caste status:

*Dubet:* The separation of the Mullah-Shādom lineages from the Kamundsu-Biju lineages in two castes is justified by the claim that the latter accepted Islam later, and are thus to be despised. Only after a while did the Mullah khel decide to grant them any right to land.

*Kandi:* The same barrier between the Mullah-Shādom-Shābiz lineages and the lineages of the lower caste in Kandi is here explained in slightly different terms: due to the nature of their apical ancestor, Bābā Ji, the Mullah khel claims to be of saintly descent, i. e. Mīans, and thus belong to a separate caste. However, they relate an injunction by Bābā Ji that they should always recognize the Shādom dānts of Shātrni, his father's brother, as their equals — consequently the Shādom and Shābiz lineages, descended from Shātrni, are included in this highest caste. The corresponding separation in Pātan arose at an unspecified time in the past. Once the armies of the whole eastern dialect group went to Swat, where they looted but had decided in advance not to take any male prisoners. However, a man from Bannkott did take a young boy by the name Nil along home — so he disclosed the presence of a male prisoner, all the families claimed him — so they took council and decided the boy could choose his own master. Secretly a descendant of Swat approached the boy a night, promising to treat him well if he chose him as a master. Nil said 'how do I recognize you in the council?' The man answered: 'By a small yellow spot beside the iris in the white of my eye.' The next day, Nil recognized him and selected him. Later he married a girl of lower caste (from where?), had two sons, and the lineages Nīlo khel and Pakra khel are descended from them. They were later given some land, but the caste barrier is maintained.

Relating to ancestry and claims to status.

*Dubet-Kandi:* (Mullah khel version, told in Pashro). Kandi was the king of the area, the ruler of 80 fortified towers, at the time when Bābā Ji, the son of Behām, was conceived. During pregnancy, his mother felt strange and unusual movements in her womb — the foetus was going through the motions of the Moslem prayer. This he continued after birth, so his mother was afraid of him.

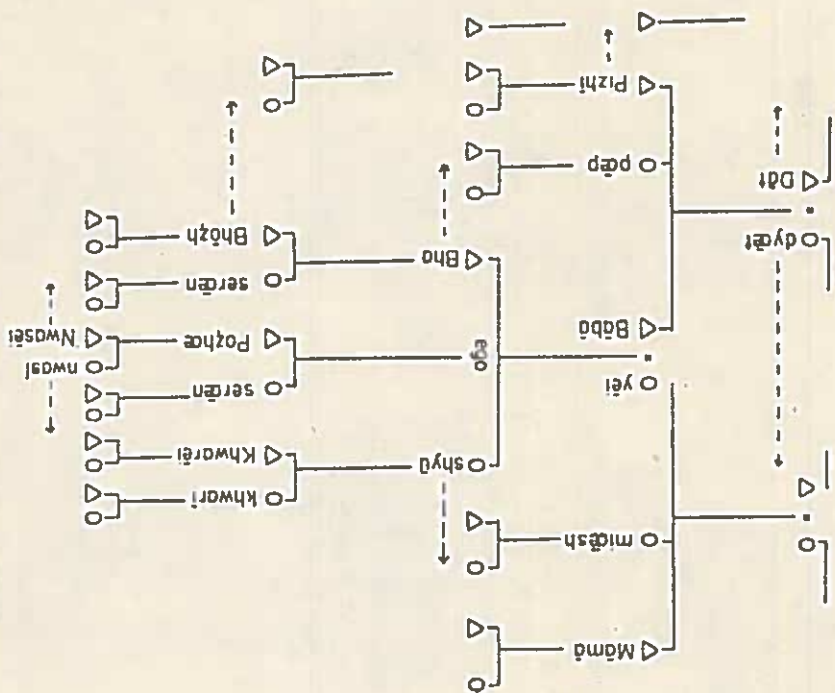


Figure 9.: Consanguinal kinship terms of Torwali of Baluchistan.



He refused her breast — so she threw him into the forest and returned to the village. After a while she came back, and found him sucking the milk of a goat. On her approach the goat fled — but the child again refused her milk, so she returned to the village. For three months, the child lived alone in the forest with the goat — then one day he came to the rock behind the present mosque in Tōti (L. Kandia valley) and called to prayer. Kandi decided to kill him, but the knife could not harm his throat. Bābā Ji said: «I have come by order of God» So Kandi became very kind to him, gave him custard (hālowa) and eggs and all good things to keep him quiet.

Ddodd, the sister's son of Kandi, went to Kābulgrām and was converted by Akhund Sadiq Bābā and Mian Bāqi Bābā. He told them that his nation was pagan, and urged them to convert Kohistan. (Only some versions credit Ddodd with this initiative.) They approached with a great army, but were unable to defeat Kandi — so they decided he must have powerful allies. Bābā Ji was only a small boy then — but Mian Bāqi Bābā saw him, and suspected him of being the power behind Kandi. They spoke to Bābā Ji, and instructed him to convince Kandi to be come a Moslem. Bābā Ji took council with Kandi, who refused. When Bābā Ji reported his failure to the assembled Moslems, they asked «why do you live with this pagan?» «He is kind to me and gives me eggs» answered Bābā Ji. «I shall give you the mother of eggs» replied Mian Bāqi Bābā, and gave him a hen. So Bābā Ji joined the Moslem army, and Kandi lost the battle — he himself was killed, and his three sons fled to Yasin, where their descendants are called Rajigān (= Kings).

Mian Bāqi Bābā and Bābā Ji then travelled to Bāttirai across the Indus: there lived a holy man by the name Dukó. They stayed with him and married his two daughters — thus Bābā Ji's claim to saintly status is confirmed by his being given the daughter of a Saint in marriage. His descendants form the Mullah khel.

*Patani*: Apical ancestors: Zuqum was an Arab king. The proof of Arab descent is (1) The caste barrier they maintain against lower people, such as nomads and weavers, just like Arabs do. (2) They carry their loads on the back (in a primitive rucksack arrangement) as do Arabs (!), not, as all other peoples, on their head. (3) The lower leg of the pant is tight right up to the knee (they were however unable to show any specimen of such pants) in Arab fashion (sic!).

His son Qāqān lived in Hindustan. He murdered one of the disciples of the Saint by the name Ajmir Sharif, and was forced to flee up into the mountains. Qāqān was a magician, he fled in the form of an eagle, and landed at Bannkórt. There he stayed with two men, but he was cruel to them, and they decided to kill him. Being a magician, he understood their evil plans; he flew away and settled on the high Lashgetesh mountain by the Indus. In Mahār, below the mountain, there lived a man with his daughter. Qāqān used to fly there, change himself back into human form, and sleep with the girl while the father was away. Eventually, she gave birth to a child. Her father asked how this could be, there was no other human being here. Then she told of the eagle-man who came regu-

larly. Qāqān then settled with them and married her, and the family increased, his descendants have spread from there to their present area.

Conversion falls at the time of Éder. Dhārūt, Kāshq, and Serkan, the founders of the major lineages. Each lineage gives its own version of the event: *Swarri khel*, the descendants of Kāshq and Serkan claim to be the first converts to Islam, and thus the most pious.

Éder *khel* grant them being the first, but emphasize the forcible nature of their conversion, having accepted it from Mian Bāqi Bābā under pressure from his army. Éder had gone off hunting, was away when this occurred; on his return, his mother informed him of what had happened. He then went to the Kartna valley (the closest Pathan area) to the village of Damāwī; there the people were ready for prayer. He joined the congregation as he was, wearing skin leggings and without washing himself. On completing their prayers, the people abused him for coming to the Mosque like that. But Rasul, a holy man there, defended him, sent the people off, and instructed Éder in the particulars of Islam. Éder thus became the first *voluntary* convert to Islam.

*Seowal*, the descendants of Dhārūt, were driven out of Patan in a political conflict where Éder, their lineage brother, sided with the *Swarri khel*. The *Seowal* accepted Islam from Akhund Sadiq Bābā, who was a pupil of Pir Bābā of Buner, and came after Mian Bāqi Bābā, converting not by force, but by persuasion. Still this would place their conversion later than that of the *Swarri* and *Éder* lineages. The *Seowal* therefore claim the mosque adventure in Kartna for their ancestor Dhārūt — he embraced Islam, and died in Karorra leaving three pagan sons in *Seo*. These sons were converted by Akhund Sadiq Bābā — after the *Patanwāls* — but the *lineage* can claim the first Kohistani Moslem as their ancestor.

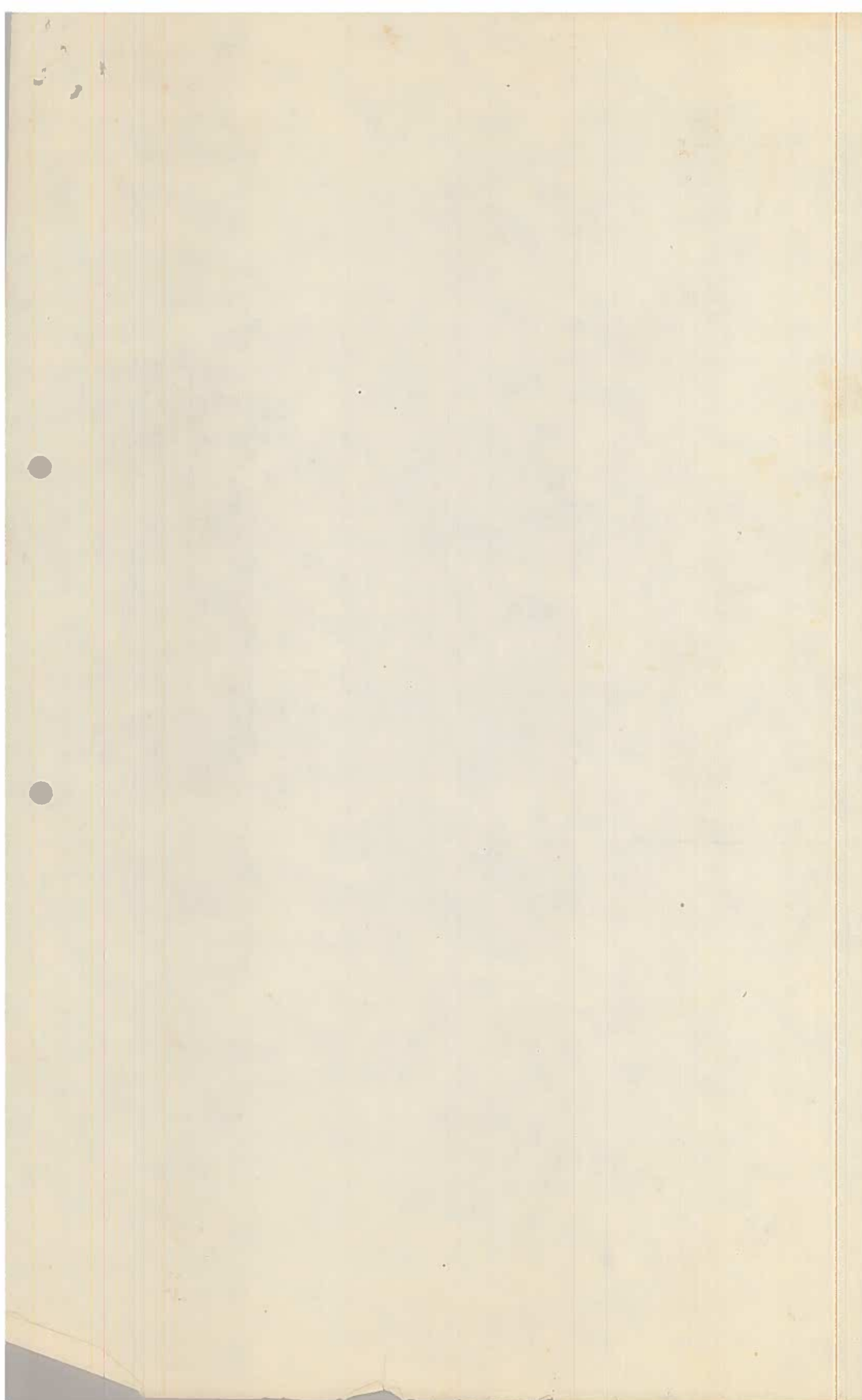
## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barth, Fredrik: *Principles of Social Organization in Southern Kurdistan*. Universitets Etnografiske Museum Bulletin No. 7, Oslo 1953.
- Barth, Fredrik: *Ecologic relationships of ethnic groups in Swat, North Pakistan*. in print, American Anthropologist
- Barth, Fredrik and Georg Morgenstierne: *Vocabularies and Specimens of some S. E. Dardic Dialects*, Norsk Tidsskrift for Språkvitenskap, Vol. 18, Oslo 1956.
- Biddulph, J.: *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*. Government Printer, Calcutta 1880.
- Hay, W. R.: *The Yusufzai State of Swat*. The Geographical Journal, vol. LXXXIV no. 3, p. 236, 1934.
- Linguistic Survey of India. Government of India Central Publication Branch. Calcutta 1927.
- Lorimer, R. O.: *Language Hunting in the Karakoram*. Allen & Unwin, London 1939.



- Morian, G. M.: *A contribution to the physical anthropology of the Swat and Hunza valleys*. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, vol. LXVI, pp. 19—42.
- Morgensiehn, Georg: *Religionsvorlesungen*, Mit og Munde, Oslo, 1949—1950.
- Robertson, Sir George Scott: *The Kafir of the Hindu Kush*. Lawrence & Bullen, London 1896.
- Robertson, Sir George Scott: *Cultural — The Story of a Minor Sirge*. Methuen & Co., London 1899.
- Stein, Sir Aurel: *Innermost Asia*. Clarendon Press, Oxford 1928.
- Stein, Sir Aurel: *On Alexander's Tracks to the Indus*. Macmillan & Co. London 1929.
- Stein, Sir Aurel: *An Archaeological Tour in Upper Swat and Adjacent Hill Tracts*. Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 42. Government of India Central Publication Branch, Calcutta 1930.
- Stein, Sir Aurel: *From Swat to the Gorges of the Indus*. The Geographical Journal, vol. C. no. 2 p. 49, 1942.
- Singh, Sardar Thakar: *Code of Tribal Custom in the Gilgit District*. R. P. Press, Jammu 1876.
- Spate, O. H. K.: *India and Pakistan*. Methuen, London 1954.





**International Library of Anthropology**

**Editor: Adam Kuper, University of Leiden**

**Features of person and society in Swat  
Collected essays on Pathans**

**Selected essays of Fredrik Barth  
Volume II**



**Arbor Scientiae  
Arbor Vitae**

**A catalogue of other Social Science books published by Routledge & Kegan Paul will be found at the end of this volume.**

**Routledge & Kegan Paul  
London, Boston and Henley**



# Contents

First published in 1981  
by Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd  
39 Store Street  
London WC1E 7DD,  
9 Park Street,

Boston, Mass. 02108, USA, and  
Broadway House,  
Newtown Road,  
Henley-on-Thames,  
Oxon RG9 1EN

Set in Press Roman 10 on 12 point  
and printed in Great Britain by  
Billing & Sons Limited  
Guildford, London, Oxford and Worcester  
© Fredrik Barth 1981

No part of this book may be reproduced in  
any form without permission from the  
publisher, except for the quotation of brief  
passages in criticism

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Barth, Fredrik

Selected essays of Fredrik Barth. (International  
library of anthropology).

Vol. 2: Features of person and society in Swat

I. Ethnology

I. Series

301.2'08 GN325 80-41524

ISBN 0-7100-0620-9

Introduction	1
✓1 Ecologic relationships of ethnic groups in Swat, North Pakistan	3
✓2 The system of social stratification in Swat, North Pakistan	16
3 Segmentary opposition and the Theory of Games: A study of Pathan organization	55
4 Role dilemmas and father-son dominance in Middle Eastern kinship systems	83
5 Ethnic processes on the Pathan-Baluch boundary	93
6 Pathan identity and its maintenance	103
7 Swat Pathans reconsidered	121
Bibliography	182
Index	186

## Introduction

Swat Pathans have figured prominently in my writing, and perhaps at times overmuch in my thinking in anthropology. Swat was my second proper fieldwork, better prepared and more confidently pursued than my first one among the Kurds, yet subjectively still novel and momentous, and therefore more formative than subsequent field experiences elsewhere. Perhaps for this reason, Swat Pathans impressed themselves very forcefully on my awareness. I have been variously criticized for casting my analysis of Swat in theoretical moulds adopted from other sources, such as Norwegian entrepreneurs (Ahmed, 1976:9 ff., though my brief study of Norwegian entrepreneurship was made subsequently to my main publications on Swat), or from Hobbes (Asad, 1972:8 ff., though Hobbes had been one of many lacunae in my reading). My own judgment would be to the contrary, that perhaps the experience of Swat Pathans has at times unduly dominated my general understanding of Man, and thus my theoretically intended formulations. Their remarkable vitality and individualism proved both easy to recognize and subjectively compelling. The relatively undisguised harshness of their lives and their explicitly strategic reasoning in their dealings with and understanding of others, seemed to lay bare basic and elementary forces in society. Their yearning for social independence, for honour and security through self-sufficiency, were easy to identify and admire, and seemed to provide a key to what propelled them and guided them in many of their activities even when the collective result sometimes spelled dependence and defeat. Their cultural focus on 'real' things — land, gold, and women in their own terms — rather than on more obviously symbolically transformed idioms and prizes, seemed elemental and fathomable. Yet these were all features that appeared to fit uneasily into the prevailing structural-functional paradigm which dominated the anthropology of the 1950s. To me all these features seemed to provide elements for a more realistic and truer paradigm of the (inter-)relation of the individual and society for which I was search-



ing — one which would allow us to identify the goals and rationality of many patterns of individual behaviour without prejudging the rationality, or-functionalism, of many of the collective consequences of such behaviour.

Each of the essays reprinted below was a step in the effort to analyse major substantive features of the social organization of Swat while at the same time uncovering the elements for such a general paradigm. With the hindsight of subsequent fieldwork in other cultures, I would judge the former purpose to have been more fully achieved than the latter, and that it may not have been till the 1970s that my generally intended statements were given a form where the stamp of Swat had been reduced to appropriate dimensions.

The essays also address other, more specific, theoretical challenges that I felt arose from the nature of the material. These include an early venture in ecologic analysis, the application of the Theory of Games to the main lineaments of a political system, an analysis of social stratification and caste, and the processes at work in ethnic differentiation and identity in a situation of social inequality and wide dispersal. A persistent challenge also arises from the large scale and complexity of the social system in Swat, posing problems that are still troublesome in anthropology today. The last chapter is new to this volume, and readdresses several of these issues, as well as some that have been raised by others in critiques and commentaries to my analysis of Swat. It is based in part on additional data from brief visits to Swat in 1960, 1974, 1978 and 1979.

Fredrik Barth  
Oslo

# 1 Ecologic relationships of ethnic groups in Swat, North Pakistan

The importance of ecologic factors for the form and distribution of cultures has usually been analysed by means of a culture area concept. This concept has been developed with reference to the aboriginal cultures of North America (Kroeber, 1939). Attempts at delimiting culture areas in Asia by similar procedures have proved extremely difficult (Bacon, 1946; Kroeber 1947; Miller, 1953), since the distribution of cultural types, ethnic groups, and natural areas rarely coincide. Coon (1951) speaks of Middle Eastern society as being built on a mosaic principle — many ethnic groups with radically different cultures co-reside in an area in symbiotic relations of variable intimacy. Referring to a similar structure, Fumivall (1944) describes the Netherlands Indies as a plural society. The common characteristic in these two cases is the combination of ethnic segmentation and economic interdependence. Thus the 'environment' of any one ethnic group is not only defined by natural conditions, but also by the presence and activities of the other ethnic groups on which it depends. Each group exploits only a section of the total environment, and leaves large parts of it open for other groups to exploit.

This interdependence is analogous to that of the different animal species in a habitat. As Kroeber (1947:330) emphasizes, culture area classifications are essentially ecologic; thus detailed ecologic considerations, rather than geographical areas of subcontinental size, should offer the point of departure. The present paper attempts to apply a more specific ecologic approach to a case study of distribution by utilizing some of the concepts of animal ecology, particularly the concept of a *niche* — the place of a group in the total environment, its relations to resources and competitors (cf. Allee, 1949:516).

• First published in *American Anthropologist* (1956), Vol. 58, no. 6, 1079-89.



## Groups

The present example is simple, relatively speaking, and is concerned with the three major ethnic groups in Swat state, North-West Frontier Province, Pakistan.<sup>1</sup> These are: (1) *Pathans* — Pasho-speaking (Iranian language family) sedentary agriculturalists; (2) *Kohistanis* — speakers of Dardic languages, practicing agriculture and transhuman herding; and (3) *Gujars* — Gujri-speaking (a lowland Indian dialect) nomadic herders. Kohistanis are probably the ancient inhabitants of most of Swat; Pathans entered as conquerors in successive waves between A.D. 1000-1600, and Gujars probably first appeared in the area some 400 years ago. Pathans of Swat State number about 450,000, Kohistanis perhaps 30,000. The number of Gujars in the area is difficult to estimate.

The centralized state organization in Swat was first established in 1917, and the most recent accretion was annexed in 1947, so the central organization has no relevance for the distributional problems discussed here.

## Area

Swat state contains sections of two main valleys, those of the Swat and the Indus rivers. The Swat river rises in the high mountains to the North, among 18,000-foot peaks. As it descends and grows in volume, it enters a deep gorge. This upper section of the valley is thus very narrow and steep. From approximately 5,000 feet, the Swat valley becomes increasingly wider as one proceeds southward, and is flanked by ranges descending from 12,000 to 6,000 feet in altitude. The river here has a more meandering course, and the valley bottom is a flat, extensive alluvial deposit.

The east border of Swat state follows the Indus river: only its west bank and tributaries are included in the area under discussion. The Indus enters the area as a very large river; it flows in a spectacular gorge, 15,000 feet deep and from 12 to 16 miles wide. Even in the north, the valley bottom is less than 3,000 feet above sea level, while the surrounding mountains reach 18,000 feet. The tributary valleys are consequently short and deeply cut, with an extremely steep profile. Further to the south, the surrounding mountain ranges recede from the river banks and lose height, the Indus deposits some sediment, and the tributary streams form wider valleys.

Climatic variations in the area are a function of altitude. Precipitation is low throughout. The southern low-altitude areas have long, hot summers and largely steppe vegetation. The Indus gorge has been described as 'a desert embedded between icy gravels' (Spate, 1954:381). The high mountains are partly covered by permanent ice and snow, and at lower levels by natural mountain meadows in the brief summer season. Between these extremes is a broad belt (from 6,000 to 11,000 feet) of forest, mainly of pine and deodar.

## Pathan-Kohistani distribution

Traditional history, in part relating to place-names of villages and uninhabited ruins, indicates that Kohistani inhabitants were driven progressively northward by Pathan invaders (cf. Stein, 1929:33, 83). This northward spread has now been checked, and the border between Kohistani and Pathan territories has been stable for some time. The last Pathan expansion northward in the Swat valley took place under the leadership of the Saint Akhund Sadiq Baba, eight generations ago. To understand the factors responsible for the stability of the present ethnic border, it is necessary to examine the specific ecologic requirements of the present Pathan economy and organization.

Pathans of Swat live in a complex, multi-caste society. The land-holding Pakhtun caste is organized in localized, segmentary, unilineal descent groups; other castes and occupational groups are tied to them as political clients and economic serfs. Subsistence is based on diversified and well-developed plough agriculture. The main crops are wheat, maize, and rice; much of the ploughed land is watered by artificial irrigation. Manuring is practised, and several systems of crop rotation and regular fallow-field rhythms are followed, according to the nature of the soil and water supply. All rice is irrigated, with nursery beds and transplantation.

Only part of the Pathan population is actively engaged in agriculture. Various other occupational groups perform specialized services in return for payment in kind, and thus require that the agriculturalists produce a considerable surplus. Further, and perhaps more importantly, the political system depends on a strong hierarchical organization of landowners and much political activity, centering around the men's houses (*hujira*). This activity diverts much manpower from productive pursuits. The large and well-organized Pathan tribes are found in the lower parts of the Swat valley and along the more southerly tributaries



of the Indus, occupying broad and fertile alluvial plains. A simpler form of political organization is found along the northern fringes of Pathan territory. It is based on families of saintly descent, and is characterized by the lack of men's houses. This simplification renders the economy of the community more efficient (a) by eliminating the wasteful potlatch-type feasts of the men's houses, and (b) by vesting political office in saintly persons of inviolate status, thus eliminating the numerous retainers that protect political leaders in other Pathan areas.

Pathan territory extends to a critical ecologic threshold: the limits within which two crops can be raised each year. This is largely a function of altitude. Two small outliers of Pashto-speaking people (Jag, in Duber valley, and a section of Kalam) are found north of this limit. They are unlike other Pathans, and similar to their Kohistani neighbors in economy and political organization.

The conclusion that the limits of double cropping constitute the effective check on further Pathan expansion seems unavoidable. Pathan economy and political organization requires that agricultural labour produce considerable surplus. Thus in the marginal, high-altitude areas, the political organization is modified and 'economized' (as also in the neighboring Dir area), while beyond these limits of double cropping the economic and social system cannot survive at all.

Kohistanis are not restricted by this barrier. The Kohistani ethnic group apparently once straddled it; and, as they were driven north by invading Pathans, they freely crossed what to Pathans was a restricting barrier. This must be related to differences between Kohistani and Pathan political and economic organization, and consequent differences in their ecologic requirements.

Kohistanis, like Pathans, practise a developed plough agriculture. Due to the terrain they occupy, their fields are located on narrow artificial terraces, which require considerable engineering skill for their construction. Parts of Kohistan receive no summer rains; the streams, fed from the large snow reserves in the mountains, supply water to the fields through complex and extensive systems of irrigation. Some manuring is practised. Climatic conditions modify the types of food crops. Maize and millet are most important; wheat and rice can only be raised in a few of the low-lying areas. The summer season is short, and fields produce only one crop a year.

Agricultural methods are thus not very different from those of Pathans, but the net production of fields is much less. Kohistanis,

however, have a two-fold economy, for transhumant herding is as important as agriculture. Sheep, goats, cattle and water buffalo are kept for wool, meat, and milk. The herds depend in summer on mountain pastures, where most of the Kohistanis spend between four and eight months each year, depending on local conditions. In some areas the whole population migrates through as many as five seasonal camps, from winter dwellings in the valley bottom to summer campsites at a 14,000 foot altitude, leaving the fields around the abandoned low-altitude dwellings to remain practically untended. In the upper Swat valley, where the valley floor is covered with snow some months of the year, winter fodder is collected and stored for the animals.

By having two strings to their bow, so to speak, the Kohistanis are able to wrest a living from inhospitable mountain areas which fall short of the minimal requirements for Pathan occupation. In these areas, Kohistanis long retained their autonomy, the main territories being conquered by Swat state in 1926, 1939, and 1947. They were, and still are, organized in politically separate village districts of from 400 to 2000 inhabitants. Each community is subdivided into a number of loosely connected patrilineal lineages. The central political institution is the village council, in which all landholding minimal lineages have their representatives. Each community also includes a family of blacksmith-cum-carpenter specialists, and a few households of tenants or farm laborers.

Neighboring communities speaking the same dialect or language<sup>2</sup> could apparently fuse politically when under external pressure, in which case they were directed by a common council of prominent leaders from all constituent lineages. But even these larger units were unable to withstand the large forces of skilled fighters which Pathans of the Swat area could mobilize. These forces were estimated at 15,000 by the British during the Ambeyia campaign in 1862 (cf. Roberts, 1898, Vol. 2:7).

#### 'Natural' subareas

The present Swat state appears to the Kohistanis as a single natural area, since, as an ethnic group, they once occupied all of it, and since their economy can function anywhere within it. With the advent of invading Pathan tribes, the Kohistanis found themselves unable to defend the land. But the land which constitutes one natural area to Kohistanis is divided by a line which Pathans were unable to cross.



From the Pathan point of view, it consists of two natural areas, one containing the ecologic requisites for Pathan occupation, the other uninhabitable.<sup>3</sup> Thus the Kohistanis were permitted to retain a part of their old territory in spite of their military inferiority, while in the remainder they were either assimilated as serfs in the conquering Pathan society or were expelled.

From the purely synchronic point of view, the present Pathan-Kohistani distribution presents a simple and static picture of two ethnic groups representing two discrete culture areas, and with a clear correspondence between these culture areas and natural areas: Pathans in broad valleys with a hot climate and scrub vegetation as against Kohistanis in high mountains with a severe climate and coniferous forest cover. Through the addition of time depth, the possibility arises of breaking down the concept of a 'natural area' into specific ecologic components in relation to the requirements of specific economies.

Analysis of the distribution of Gujars in relation to the other ethnic groups requires such a procedure. Gujars are found in both Pathan and Kohistani areas, following two different economic patterns in both areas: transhumant herding, and true nomadism. But while they are distributed throughout all of the Pathan territory, they are found only in the western half of Kohistan, and neither reside nor visit in the eastern half. The division into mountain and valley seems irrelevant to the Gujars, while the mountain area — inhospitable to Pathans and usable to Kohistanis — is divided by a barrier which Gujars do not cross. The economy and other features of Gujar life must be described before this distribution and its underlying factors can be analysed.

Gujars constitute a floating population of herders, somewhat ill-defined due to a variable degree of assimilation into the host populations. In physical type, as well as in dress and language, the majority of them are easily distinguishable. Their music, dancing, and manner of celebrating rites of passage differ from those of their hosts. Their political status is one of dependence on the host population.

The Gujar population is subdivided into a number of named patrilineal tribes or clans — units claiming descent from a common known or unknown ancestor, but without supporting genealogies. There are sometimes myths relating to the clan origin, and these frequently serve as etymologies for the clan name. The clans vary greatly in size and only the smallest are localized. The effective descent units are patrilineal lineages of limited depth, though there is greater identification between unrelated Gujars bearing the same clan name than between strangers

of different clans. These clans are irrelevant to marriage regulations. There is little intermarriage between Gujars and the host group.

The economy of the Gujars depends mainly on the herding of sheep, goats, cattle, and water buffalo. In addition to animal products, Gujars require some grain (maize, wheat, or millet) which they get by their own agriculture in marginal, high-altitude fields or by trade in return for clarified butter, meat, or wool. Their essential requirements may be satisfied by two rather different patterns of life — transhumance and true nomadism. Pathans differentiate persons pursuing these two patterns by the terms Gujar and Ajer, respectively, and consider them to be ethnic subdivisions. In fact, Gujars may change their pattern of life from one to the other.

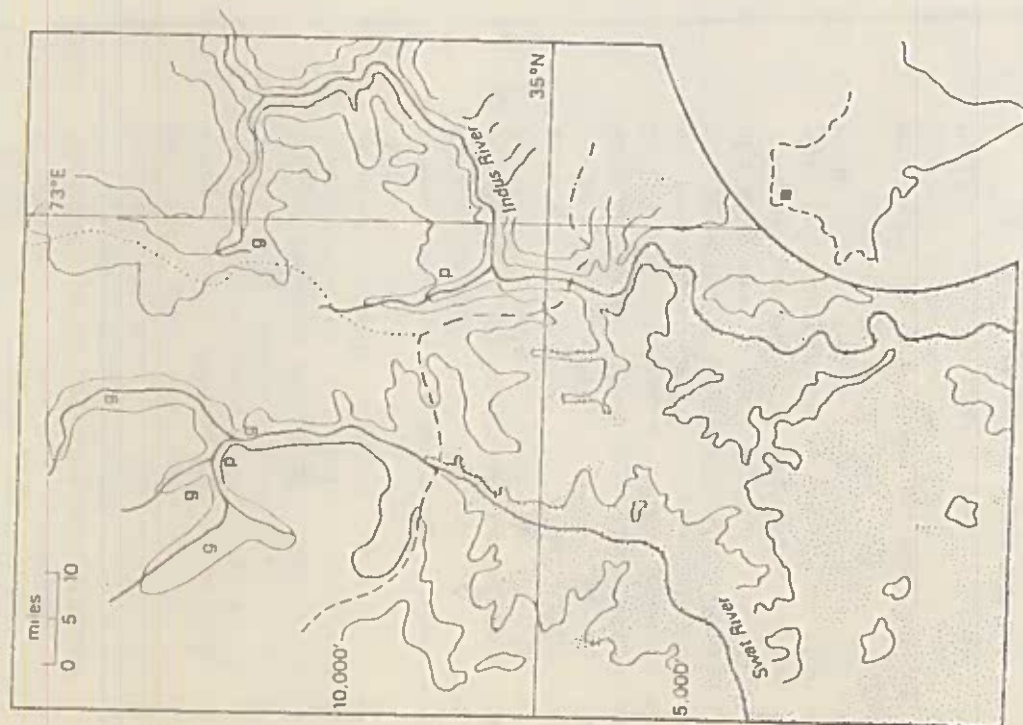
Transhumance is practised mainly by Gujars in the Pathan area, but also occasionally in Kohistan (see map 1). Symbiotic relationships between Gujars and Pathans take various forms, some quite intimate. Pathans form a multicaste society, into which Gujars are assimilated as a specialized occupational caste of herders. Thus most Pathan villages contain a small number of Gujars — these may speak Gujri as their home language and retain their separate culture, or may be assimilated to the extent of speaking only Pashto. Politically they are integrated into the community in a client or serf status. Their role is to care for the animals (mainly water buffalo and draft oxen) either as servants of a landowner or as independent buffalo owners. They contribute to the village economy with milk products (especially clarified butter), meat, and manure, which is important and carefully utilized in the fields.

In addition to their agricultural land, most Pathan villages control neighboring hills or mountainsides, which are used by Pathans only as a source of firewood. The transhumant Gujars, however, shift their flocks to these higher areas for summer pasture, for which they pay a fixed rate, in kind, per animal. This rent supplies the landholders with clarified butter for their own consumption. Gujars also serve as agricultural laborers in the seasons of peak activity, most importantly during the few hectic days of rice transplantation. They also seed fields of their own around their summer camps for harvest the following summer.

In Kohistan there is less symbiosis between Gujars and their hosts but the pattern is similar, except that the few fields are located by the winter settlements.

The transhumant cycle may be very local. Some Gujars merely move





MAP 1 Sketch map of area of Swat state, Pakistan

Stippled area: under cultivation by Pathans. Broken line: border between Pathan and Kohistani areas. Dotted line: border of area utilized by Gujars (the two borders coincide towards the south east). p: outlying Pathan communities. g: outlying communities of transhumant Gujars. Gujar nomads spend the summer in the mountains central and north on the map, and winter in the southernmost area of the map. Inset: location of sketch map.

from Pathan villages in the valley bottom to hillside summer settlements 1,000 or 1,500 feet above, visible from the village. Others travel 20 or 30 miles to summer grazing grounds in the territory of a different Pathan tribe from that of their winter hosts.

Nomads travel much farther, perhaps 100 miles, utilizing the high mountain pastures in the summer and wintering in the low plains. While the transhumant Gujars place their main emphasis on the water buffalo, the nomads specialize in the more mobile sheep and goats. None the less, the two patterns are not truly distinct, for some groups combine features of both. They spend the spring in the marginal hills of Pathan territory, where they seed a crop. In summer the men take the herds of sheep and goats to the high mountains while the women remain behind to care for the buffalo and the fields. In autumn the men return with the herds, reap the crops, and utilize the pastures. Finally, they store the grain and farm out their buffalo with Pathan villagers, and retire to the low plains with their sheep and goats for the winter.

The true nomads never engage in agricultural pursuits: they may keep cattle, but are not encumbered with water buffalo. The degree of autonomous political organization is proportional to the length of the yearly migration. Households of locally transhumant Gujars are tied individually to Pathan leaders. Those crossing Pathan tribal borders are organized in small lineages, the better to bargain for low grazing tax. The true nomads co-ordinate the herding of flocks and migrations of people from as many as fifty households, who may also camp together for brief periods. Such groups generally consist of several small lineages, frequently of different clans, related by affinal or cognatic ties and under the direction of a single leader. Thus, though migrating through areas controlled by other political organizations, they retain a moderately well-defined organization of their own.

#### Gujar distribution

The co-existence of Gujars and Pathans in one area poses no problem, in view of the symbiotic relations sketched above. Pathans have the military strength to control the mountainous flanks of the valleys they occupy, but have no effective means of utilizing these areas. This leaves an unoccupied ecologic niche which the Gujar ethnic group has entered and to which it has accommodated itself in a politically dependent position through a pattern of transhumance. Symbiotic advantages make the relationship satisfactory and enduring. It is tempting to see



the expansion of Gujars into the area as resulting from the Pathan expulsion of Kohistanis from the valley. The Kohistanis, through their own pattern of transhumance, formerly filled the niche and it became vacant only when the specialized agricultural Pathans conquered the valley bottom and replaced the Kohistanis.

But the co-existence of Gujars and Kohistanis poses a problem, since the two groups appear to utilize the same natural resources and therefore to occupy the same ecologic niche. One would expect competition, leading to the expulsion of one or the other ethnic group from the area. However, armed conflict between the two groups is rare, and there is no indication that one is increasing at the expense of the other. On the other hand, if a stable symbiotic or non-competitive relationship may be established between the two groups, why should Gujars be concentrated in West Kohistan, and not inhabit the essentially similar East Kohistan area? The answer must be sought not only in the natural environment and in features of the Gujar economy, but also in the relevant social environment — in features of Kohistani economy and organization which affect the niche suited to utilization by Gujars.

#### East vs. West Kohistan

As indicated, Kohistanis have a two-fold economy combining agriculture and transhumant herding, and live in moderately large village communities. Although most Gujars also practise some agriculture, it remains a subsidiary activity. It is almost invariably of a simple type dependent on water from the melting snow in spring and monsoon rains in summer, rather than on irrigation, and on shifting fields rather than manuring. The Kohistanis have a more equal balance between agriculture and herding. The steep slopes require complex terracing and irrigation, which preclude shifting agriculture and encourage more intensive techniques. The size of herds is limited by the size of fields, which supply most of the winter fodder, since natural fields and mountain meadows are too distant from the winter dwellings to permit having. Ecologic factors relevant to this balance between the two dominant economic activities become of prime importance for Kohistani distribution and settlement density.

There are significant differences in this respect between East and West Kohistan, i.e. between the areas drained by the Indus and the Swat rivers respectively. While the Indus and the lowest sections of its tributaries flow at no more than 3,000 feet, the Swat river descends

from 8,000 to 5,000 feet in the section of its valley occupied by Kohistanis. The higher altitude in the west has several effects on the economic bases for settlement: (a) Agricultural production is reduced by the shorter season and lower temperatures in the higher western valley. (b) The altitude difference combined with slightly higher precipitation in the west results in a greater accumulation of snow. The Indus bank is rarely covered with snow, but in the upper Swat valley snow tends to accumulate through the winter and remains in the valley bottom until April or May. Thus the sedentary stock-owner in West Kohistan must provide stored fodder for his animals throughout the four months of winter. (c) The shorter season of West Kohistan eliminates rice (most productive per land unit) as a food crop and reduces maize (most advantageous in return per weight of seed) in favor of the harder millet.

These features serve to restrict the agricultural production of West Kohistan, and therefore the number of animals that can be kept during the winter season. No parallel restrictions limit the possibility for summer grazing. Both East and West Kohistan are noteworthy for their large, lush mountain meadows and other good summer grazing, and are thus rich in the natural resources which animal herders are able to exploit. However, these mountain pastures are only seasonal; no population can rely on them for year-round sustenance. Consequently, patterns of transhumance or nomadism are developed to utilize the mountain areas in its productive season, while relying on other areas or techniques the rest of the year. True nomads move to a similar ecologic niche in another area. People practising transhumance generally utilize a different niche by reliance on alternative techniques, here agriculture and the utilization of stored animal fodder. There appears to be a balance in the productivity of these two niches, as exploited by local transhumance in East Kohistan. Thus, in the Indus drainage, Kohistanis are able to support a human and animal population of sufficient size through the winter by means of agriculture and stored food, so as to utilize fully the summer pastures of the surrounding mountains. In an ecologic sense, the local population fills both niches. There is no such balance in the Swat valley. Restrictions on agricultural production limit the animal and human population, and prevent full exploitation of the mountain pastures. This niche is thus left partly vacant and available to the nomadic Gujars, who winter in the low plains outside the area. Moreover, scattered communities of transhumant Gujars may be found in the western areas, mainly at the very



tops of the valleys. With techniques and patterns of consumption different from those of Kohistanis, they are able to survive locally in areas which fall short of the minimal requirements for permanent Kohistani occupation. The present distribution of Gujars in Kohistan, limiting them to the western half of the area, would seem to be a result of these factors.

A simple but rather crucial final point should be made in this analysis: why do Kohistanis have first choice, so to speak, and Gujars only enter niches left vacant by them? Since they are able to exploit the area more fully, one might expect Gujars eventually to replace Kohistanis. Organizational factors enter here. Kohistanis form compact, politically organized villages of considerable size. The Gujar seasonal cycle prevents a similar development among them. In winter they descend into Pathan areas, or even out of tribal territory and into the administered areas of Pakistan. They are thus seasonally subject to organizations more powerful than their own, and are forced to filter through territories controlled by such organizations on their seasonal migrations. They must accommodate themselves to this situation by travelling in small, unobtrusive groups, and wintering in dispersed settlements. Though it is conceivable that Gujars might be able to develop the degree of political organization required to replace Kohistanis in a purely Kohistani environment, their dependence on more highly organized neighboring areas still makes this impossible.

The transhumant Gujar settlements in Kohistan represent groups of former nomads who were given permission by the neighboring Kohistanis to settle, and they are kept politically subservient. The organizational superiority of the already established Kohistanis prevents them, as well as the nomads, from appropriating any rights over productive means or areas. What changes will occur under the present control by the state of Swat is a different matter.

This example may serve to illustrate certain viewpoints applicable to a discussion of the ecologic factors in the distribution of ethnic groups, cultures, or economies, and the problem of 'mosaic' co-residence in parts of Asia.

1 The distribution of ethnic groups is controlled not by objective and fixed 'natural areas' but by the distribution of the specific ecologic niches which the group, with its particular economic and political organization, is able to exploit. In the present example, what appears as a single natural area to Kohistanis is subdivided as far as Pathans are concerned, and this division is cross-cut with respect to the specific

requirements of Gujars.

2 Different ethnic groups will establish themselves in stable co-residence in an area if they exploit different ecologic niches, and especially if they can thus establish symbiotic economic relations, as those between Pathans and Gujars in Swat.

3 If different ethnic groups are able to exploit the same niches fully, the militarily more powerful will normally replace the weaker, as Pathans have replaced Kohistanis.

4 If different ethnic groups exploit the same ecologic niches but the weaker of them is better able to utilize marginal environments, the groups may co-reside in one area, as Gujars and Kohistanis in West Kohistan.

Where such principles are operative to the extent they are in much of West and South Asia, the concept of 'culture areas', as developed for native North America, becomes inapplicable. Different ethnic groups and culture types will have overlapping distributions and disconforming borders, and will be socially related to a variable degree, from the 'watchful co-residence' of Kohistanis and Gujars to the intimate economic, political, and ritual symbiosis of the Indian caste system. The type of correspondence between gross ecologic classification and ethnic distribution documented for North America by Kroeber (1939) will rarely if ever be found. Other conceptual tools are needed to the study of culture distribution in Asia. Their development would seem to depend on analysis of specific detailed distributions in an ecologic framework, rather than by speculation on a larger geographical scale.

#### Notes

- 1 Based on fieldwork February to November 1954, aided by a grant from the Royal Norwegian Research Council.
- 2 There are four main Dardic languages spoken in Swat state: Torwali, Gawri, and Eastern and Western dialect of Kohistani or Mayan (Barth and Morgenstierne, 1957).
- 3 The Pathan attitude toward the Kohistan area might best be illustrated by the warnings I was given when I was planning to visit the area: 'Full of terrible mountains covered by many-colored snow and emitting poisonous gases causing head and stomach pains when you cross the high passes; inhabited by robbers, and snakes that coil up and leap ten feet into the air; with no villages, only scattered houses on the mountain tops!'



## 2 The system of social stratification in Swat, North Pakistan

### Introduction

The present paper describes the system of social stratification in the Swat area of North Pakistan. It is a hierarchical system of stable social groups, differing greatly in wealth, privilege, power, and the respect accorded to them by others. The local term for such groups is *qoum*. In any such system the organization of one stratum can only meaningfully be described with reference to its relations to the other strata, and in the pages which follow the various *qoum* are analysed as parts of a single, larger system embracing the whole community, and not as autonomous social units. My concern is with social structure, not with ritual or religion, and, for my purpose, although the people of Swat, as Sunni Muslims, fall far outside the Hindu fold, their system of social stratification may meaningfully be compared to that of Hindu caste systems.

Caste, as a pattern of social stratification, is characterized by the simplicity of its basic schema, and its comprehensiveness. In contrast, class systems (in the sense used by Warner and Lunt, 1942) give simultaneous recognition to a multiplicity of conflicting hierarchical criteria, while systems of rank, though single in the scale which each defines, are generally restricted in their fields of relevance.

The simultaneous comprehensiveness and clear definition of units which characterizes caste systems results from the summation of many part-statutes into standardized clusters, or social persons, each identified with a specific caste position. Thus, in a Hindu caste system, there is a diversity of economic statuses and ritual statuses, but these are interconnected so that all Priests are sacred and all Leatherworkers are untouchable.

- First published in E.R. Leach (ed.) (1960) *Aspects of Caste in South India, Ceylon and North-West Pakistan*, Cambridge Papers in Social Anthropology, No. 2, Cambridge University Press.

A sociological analysis of such a system naturally concentrates on the principles governing the summation of statuses, and the consequent structural features of the clusters of connected statuses or caste positions. Every individual has statuses in the occupational framework of the community, in the framework of kinship relations, etc. The caste system defines clusters of such statuses, and one particular cluster is imposed on all individual members of each particular caste.

The coherence of the system depends upon the compatibility of such associated statuses. The members of the society itself justify the clusters by asserting an inherent compatibility in a moral or ultimate sense. Thus, among Hindus, the concept of pollution serves to define which statuses should be combined, and which are incompatible. In Swat, other concepts, such as privilege and shame, serve similarly as explicit justifications. But sociological principles are also involved in the question of compatibility. Each caste position must be such that the requirements implied by its component statuses may be simultaneously satisfied, and the alignment of each individual in terms of his different statuses should also be consistent and not fraught with interminable dilemmas. The former aspect of compatibility relates to roles, the latter to the degree of congruence between different organizational frameworks. In the essay which follows both aspects will be explored.

The area under discussion constitutes the main section of a large, fertile valley, roughly seventy by thirty miles, in tribal territory in the northern part of West Pakistan.<sup>1</sup> A major part of the valley lies within the borders of Swat state, a small part in Dir state, and the remaining, lower part, in Malakand agency — all recent political subdivisions of minor significance to the present problem.<sup>2</sup> The climate is fairly dry, but water for irrigation is plentiful. In the valley bottom, the population depends on cereal agriculture, particularly of rice, for its subsistence. This valley area has a population density of roughly 1,000 per square mile, and is extensively irrigated by the Swat river and its main tributaries. Settlement is in compact villages numbering from 100 to 5,000 houses (each occupied by an elementary family). The mountainous areas bordering on the valley have a much sparser population, scattered in hamlets of five to twenty houses. In these hill settlements, maize is the main cereal, but pastoral pursuits are important as well.

The total population of the whole Swat region is about half a million, dependent throughout on a complex subsistence economy. Agricultural techniques are sophisticated, and include crop rotation, the use of decomposed natural fertilizer, etc. Craft specialization is also highly



developed. In contrast, communications are poor. Each community is largely self-sufficient and all are of similar type, though varying in size. Politically, the area is anarchic. The self-sufficient communities do not depend on wider co-ordinating agencies of any kind, and internally there is much conflict and factionalism. Swat communities have never been subject to external government. Such centralized institutions as exist are weak and are a recent internal development. All major political decisions, the conduct of law, and the protection of life and property are the responsibility of members of the local community, whose actions are governed mainly by internal considerations.

Each Swat community contains a number of unequal groups, known as *qoum* (sing.) in the Pokhto (Pashtu) dialect of Swat. The general meaning of this term is 'tribe, sect, people, nation, family' (Raverty, 1867), but in Swat it is used predominantly as a term for these hierarchically-ordered social groups, though occasionally also for religion or sect. A full list of such groups will be given below; in a general way they fall into the following categories, in descending rank order: (1) persons of holy descent; (2) landowners and administrators; (3) priests; (4) craftsmen; (5) agricultural tenants and labourers; (6) herders; and (7) despised groups. All these groups are represented in nearly every village; in varying degrees each is dependent on the skills and services of all the others, and together they form the community.

The various *qoum* are not strictly homologous — the kinds of criteria which define membership, and the internal organization of each group, differ quite profoundly. Furthermore, there is no ritual system in terms of which the groups are compared and ordered with respect to each other. In contrast to a Hindu caste system there is no symbolic framework within which the homology of the groups may be expressed. Social stratification is expressed in everyday profane situations in a vast number of different ways, but never as a single, comprehensive system. Moreover, the Muslim religion, to which the whole population subscribes, explicitly repudiates the very social differences which the existence of *qoum* implies. Sacred activities continually assert the basic unity and equality of all Muslims.

Swat *qoum* are thus not castes in the Hindu sense of the word; yet they are too diverse and rigidly separate to be described simply as social classes. Furthermore, Swat lies on the edge of the Indian world and partakes to a certain extent in Indian traditions. Thus the different *qoum* within a single community participate in non-monetary reciprocal services on the model of the Hindu *jajmani* system, and the relative

ranking of many occupations, and even their names, correspond to those of the villages in the Indian plains, and so on. For the rest of this paper I shall in fact refer to the Swat *qoum* as castes. It must be remembered that they are castes only in a very general sense. Taking Hindu caste as the ideal type, the Swat variety is a limiting case.

### Historical summary

Something needs to be said here concerning the historical background of contemporary Swat society. History explains the presence of Indian cultural influences and illustrates the ethnic multiplicity of the 'castes' which make up the communities of modern Swat. In addition, history is used by the people of Swat themselves to explain the relative social standing of different castes.

Though Swat lies in the middle of a turbulent cultural shatter zone, it is geographically isolated in that no major routes of communication pass through the valley. Within the last century neighbours within a radius of 100 miles have variously paid taxes to Peking, Bokhara, Kabul, and Delhi, but Swat has probably never paid tax to any external government. Yet it has had contact with all the major political currents in the area, and the first historical mention of the valley goes back to a hymn of the Rigveda (Stein, 1929: viii). Very dense populations were established at an early date, as is shown by Greek (327 B.C.) and Chinese (A.D. 519) records. After a Buddhist phase Hindu religion reasserted itself, so that, at the time of the Muslim invasions (A.D. 1000) the population was solidly Hindu (*ibid.*, ix). These invasions caused no break in local traditions: in the place-names given in the early Greek sources may be recognized the names of the major villages of modern Swat (*ibid.*, 47, 60). Conversion to Islam was thus something imposed by a small group of warrior lords, with the bulk of the population maintaining its secular Indian traditions. The main body of the modern agricultural tenants in Swat, who are without known ancestry, probably descend from this formerly Hindu population. Some basic modern village institutions may reasonably be assumed to represent continuations of ancient Indian originals.

The first Muslim masters of Swat were non-Pathan Dilazak tribes from south-east Afghanistan. These were later ousted by Swati Pathans, who were in turn succeeded in the sixteenth century by Yusufzai Pathans. Both groups of Pathans came from the Kabul valley. The Yusufzai form the present caste of landowners. Some groups of agri-



cultural tenants trace Dilazak and Swati descent, while a group of Swatis whose ancestors were displaced by the Yusufzai invasion from the landowners along the east bank of the Indus. The present political and economic dominance of the Yusufzai landowners is justified by the people themselves by reference to this history of conquest.

The diversity of castes in Swat has also been augmented by infiltration. Since the time of the conversion to Islam, a number of local lineages claiming descent from the Prophet Mohammed, or from prominent Saints, have swelled the ranks of the Sainity caste. These migrant 'Saints' came mostly from Turkistan. Rival 'Saint' groups from Persia, representing the Shi'ah schism, have been unsuccessful in the exclusively Sunni Swat. From lowland India, Gujar pastoralists speaking the Gujri language have moved up into the area and appropriated the occupation of herders. These same people have also established themselves as a dependent tribe of nomads and hill cultivators. Other small tribeslets of unknown origin are today assimilated to the Gujar caste by virtue of their pastoralist way of life. Certain occupational castes are alleged to be recent immigrants from the lowlands, a view supported by their physical characteristics. Thus the caste of Muleteers which monopolizes trade and transport is supposed to be of Bengali origin; these people are said to have arrived in Swat about 200 years ago. Similarly the Leatherworkers are thought to be recent immigrants from Panjab. Barbers regard themselves as the local representatives of a homogeneous barber caste found throughout Pakistan and northern India. Finally, with the growing sophistication of Pathan chiefs, a need has arisen for the services of sweepers. During the past thirty years about a dozen families of sweeper caste have been brought into the valley from the Pakistan plains.

This historical sketch highlights the capacity of the Swat *qoum* system to accommodate diverse ethnic groups within a framework of discrete categories, and the intimate connection of this system with the traditions of India. But unlike the Hindu caste system, the basic organizational framework is defined, not by ritual, but by occupation and division of labour. I shall therefore first describe the positions of the castes of Swat with regard to occupation and then proceed to discuss other types of relationships.

### Occupational framework

A complete list of all the caste groups to be found in the Swat area would have to be based on very extensive census surveys, for many

groups are small and found in a few localities only. The following list, based on censuses of six villages in different parts of the area, includes all groups of any numerical importance. They are:

<i>Occupational category</i>	<i>Pashu name</i>
1. Descendant of the Prophet	Sayyid Sahibzada
2. Saints of various degrees, all land-owners and mediators in conflict	Mian Akhundzada Purzada Pakhtun
3. Landowners and warriors	Mullah
4. Priest	Dulkandar
5. Shopkeeper	Paracha
6. Muleteer	Zamdar
7. Farmer, tenant	Zarger
8. Goldsmith	Sarkhamar
9. Tailor	Tarkam
10. Carpenter	Inger
11. Blacksmith	Kulal
12. Porter	Tili
13. Oil-presser	Landap
14. Cotton-carder	Jola
15. Weaver	Mochi
16. Leatherworker	Dehqan
17. Agricultural labourer	Gujar
18. Herdsman	Jalawan
19. Ferryman	Dam
20. Musician and dancer	Dobi
21. Washerman	Nai
22. Barber	Kashkol
23. Thong- and sieve-maker, dancer	

These are the alternative names by which persons will identify themselves when asked what is their *qoum* (caste).

Let us first regard this simply as a system of occupational statuses, a scheme for the division of labour. These occupational statuses are rigidly segregated and cannot be combined, except in the following cases: a priest, as well as being in charge of a mosque, is expected to support himself by agriculture (as proprietor of dedicated lands or as a tenant) and by trade; carpentry may be combined with blacksmithing,



as a basis for specializing in the construction of watermills; and herds-men may engage in agriculture, as tenants or labourers. But it is impossible to work simultaneously as an oil-presser and as a tenant, as a tailor and as a shopkeeper, as a leatherworker and as a thong- and sieve-maker. Even personal versatility is unusual; it is regarded as quite inappropriate for a tenant to mend his own plough. On the other hand the products or services of specialists in each of these twenty-two occupations are all equally essential. All the occupations must therefore be represented in each self-sufficient community.

Pathans, however, distinguish quite clearly between caste status (*qoum*) and occupational status (*kash, kaw*); it is quite possible for a man to say: 'I am a Carpenter, but I am working as a muleteer.' This does not mean that he is at one and the same time both carpenter and muleteer; it means that his caste status is 'Carpenter', but his occupational status is 'muleteer'. Despite this the occupational system provides the basic conceptual framework for the interrelations of castes. Caste status is ascribed to individuals by virtue of their paternity, while occupations are the subject of individual choice. But 'being of Carpenter caste' means, in Swat, that you are *expected* to work as a carpenter; any other occupation, though formally open, is regarded as anomalous. Caste status and occupational status are not identical, but each caste position is identified with an occupational position. As well as being the ideal, this identification corresponds very closely to empirical facts: of the 476 heads of households registered in the complete censuses of four small villages, only 16 per cent were engaged in occupations inappropriate to their caste. The correlation of caste status and occupational status in one of these villages is shown diagrammatically in Figure 2.1.

The significance of this discrepancy between caste and occupation will be discussed in the second part of this essay but, for the moment, I shall ignore it. First, I shall describe the productive system of Swat, and show how this is relevant to (a) the rigid segregation of statuses in the occupational system, (b) the effects which each occupational position has on the position and organization of the caste occupying it, and (c) the composition of local communities which results from these factors.

The distinguishing feature of the productive system of Swat is that, although it depends on a high degree of individual specialization and division of labour, it functions with a very small volume of exchange medium in an essentially non-monetary economy. The rigid segregation

of occupational statuses follows directly from these facts. Because the volume of money is small it is difficult to provide for the extensive exchange of services and goods. What is exchanged is *services*, rather than either money or goods. There is a complex pattern of reciprocal services within groups of persons who have direct social relations with one another. To make such a system of exchange function, the respective services due from each participating member must be clearly defined, and kept rigidly separate. The Swat 'caste' system may thus be seen as a device whereby a high degree of occupational specialization may be achieved in a non-monetary economy.

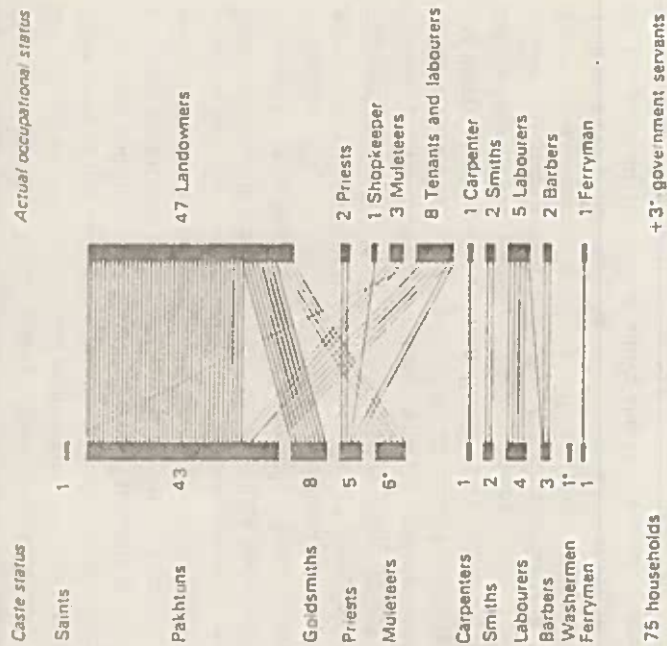


FIGURE 2.1 Castes and occupation in Worejo

- Two men of Muleteer caste and one of Washerman caste worked as government servants and were outside the occupational hierarchy.

The main products of the Swat valley are agricultural and a pre-dominant fraction of the population is engaged, directly or indirectly,



in agricultural activity. Agricultural production is maintained by pooling the resources and labour of a number of specialists, including as a minimum: landowner, tenant and/or labourer, carpenter, smith, muleteer, and rope- and thong-maker. Each of these contributes to the total production in the following manner:

1 By and large only members of the Pakhtun or Saini castes own land and among these most land is concentrated in the hands of a small number of prominent chiefs and landlords who do not themselves engage in manual labour. Their contribution to the productive team is to provide the land. Sometimes they also supply seed and equipment.

2 The agricultural work itself — ploughing, seeding, irrigating, harvesting, etc. — is done by tenants and agricultural labourers. Their tools and equipment — yokes, ploughs, harrows, etc. — are wrought by the carpenter and the smith, who also perform all repairs on these implements.

3 Transport — of seed, fertilizer and crop — is provided by the muleteer.

4 Ropes, brooms, sieves, pitchforks tied with thongs, bridles for the mules, etc. are made and repaired by the rope- and thong-maker.

In a monetary economy, the co-ordination of such various specialists could be achieved through a system of wages or cash payments between dyads, such as employer/employee, buyer/seller, etc. But the people of Swat, though long familiar with money, have no centralized institutions to which they would grant the authority to mint coins, and they have not developed any convenient alternative exchange media. Grain is extensively used in payment for contractual services of long duration, but grain is too bulky to be readily transferred. Substantial quantities of money (now predominantly in the form of Pakistan rupees) reach Swat from the outside through government subsidies, exports and migrant labour. But the volume of this exchange medium is not nearly sufficient to serve the internal exchange requirements of a diversified population of half a million people.

The co-ordination of these occupational specialists must thus be achieved in an essentially non-monetary economy. This is done through the formation of productive teams, in many ways analogous to the European medieval manor. Within such teams each specialist contributes with the skills and equipment or resources appropriate to his status, and receives in return a fraction of the resultant product. The members of each team are in constant communication with one another, and co-ordinate their activities in a manner analogous to what industrial

sociologists call 'continuous flow production'. Thus the tool-makers do not produce ploughs, ropes, etc. autonomously, to store in a shop and have on hand in case of future need; instead they work in response to the specific requirements of the tenants in their team, who in turn accommodate their pattern of work in the fields to the workshop and transport facilities provided in their team. The members of the team thus form a single co-ordinated productive unit, with communications passing directly from every member to every other member.

In the definition of its boundaries, and in its system of sharing profits, each team is hierarchically and centrally organized. The landowner is the pivot on which the organization is based. The team is formed through a series of dyadic contracts between the landlord and each separate specialist; there are no contracts between the different specialists, although in fact they directly co-ordinate their work. Similarly, remuneration for services flows from the landlord and not from the persons to whom the actual services were rendered. Thus, a blacksmith produces a plough on the request of a labourer, because they belong in the same productive team, both having contractual relations with the same landowner. The labourer gives the smith no remuneration for this service. At the completion of the productive cycle, both smith and labourer receive their reward in the form of a share in the joint production of the team — a certain number of tons of rice and wheat. They receive this from the landowner, who himself took no part in the reciprocal system of services, but with whom all the contracts were established.

This pattern of organization, and the flow of remuneration, may be expressed diagrammatically as in Figure 2:2.

The duties implied by each status position in the system are traditionally defined, the share of each in the total product likewise. The carpenter contracts to produce and maintain all implements or parts of implements traditionally made by carpenters which are necessary to maintain production — that is, all wooden equipment used by tenants, labourers, smiths, and muleteers at any time working on the estate. No record is kept of the actual jobs done by each person — they do what needs doing, for a contractual minimum period of one agricultural season. At the completion of the harvest and threshing, the tenant or labourer calls all his team partners to the cleaned and dried grain piled beside the threshing-grounds among the fields. In the simplest case, shares in the crop are then allotted, under the supervision of the landowner, to all who are members of the productive team,



and-to each in proportion to his traditional claim. The crop is laid out in long rows of small, equal piles. The landlord himself, or his estate overseer, then passes along the rows and allots one in every four to the tenant (or one in every five to the labourer,

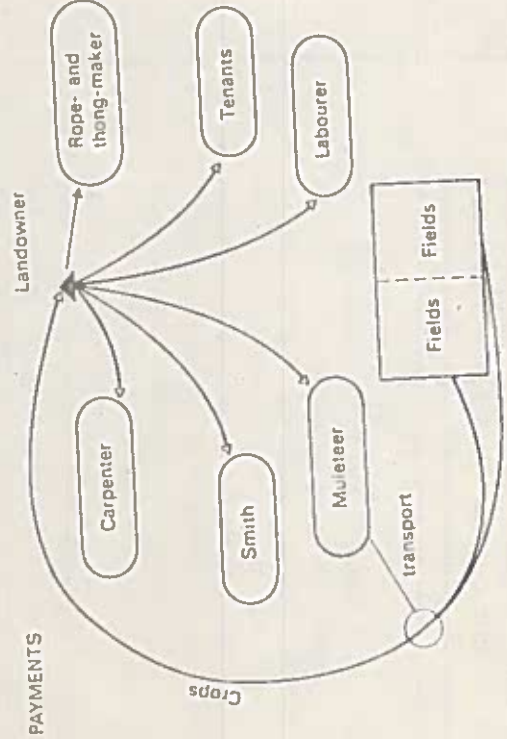
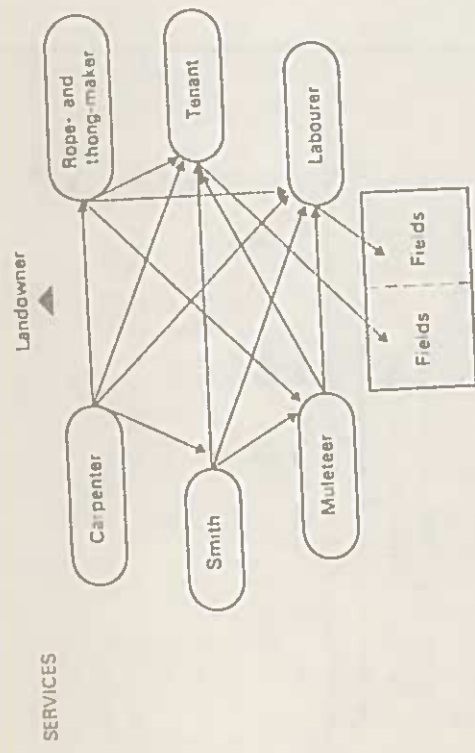


FIGURE 2.2 The organization of agricultural activities in Swat: services and remuneration

that is a man who has contributed labour only, not, as the tenant, with seed and bullocks as well), one in every twenty to the muleteer, one in every forty to the carpenter, one in every forty to the smith, and occasional piles as alms to the poor. The rope- and thong-maker usually receives a set amount yearly. In this way, every member of the team receives his fraction of the gross product, while the remainder — in fact a lion's share — goes to the landowner.

Variations from this most common procedure all follow the same general pattern. Sometimes one productive team works the land of several landowners; but in such cases, although the work in the different fields is co-ordinated, the landlords themselves do not pool their resources. The product of each field is divided separately.

The historical connexion of this pattern of organization with the Hindu *jajmani* system is obvious. More important in the present context is its effect on the occupational status system. The organization of work depends on a clear delimitation and allotment of duties to each member of the group, while the pattern of remuneration similarly requires adherence to a traditional schema for the allocation of duties and rights. The system breaks down if any individual assumes duties which are proper to status positions other than his own. The smith who services an estate will claim his contractual share of the produce even if a tenant has done some of the smith's work; and there is no way to adjust the division of the produce so that both parties will accept the adjustment as a fair settlement.

If the occupational contracts are to retain their functional simplicity, they must cover the complete roles of the traditional statuses. The remuneration goes to the holder of a role; it is not a reward for 'piece-work'. And these roles are furthermore so balanced in relation to the yearly cycle of labour requirements that it is very difficult for an individual to combine two roles at once. For example, in the peak season of agricultural activity, at the times of harvests and rice transplantation, there are brief periods when, under the traditional system, all the available labour both agricultural and non-agricultural is in full employment at the same time. A man who was at once both a tenant and a smith would be unable to carry out his seasonal smith duties because he would already be fully committed to agricultural duties in his capacity as tenant. The system thus requires a strict segregation of the different occupational roles. This segregation is achieved, in Swat, by the close identification of occupational status with caste status.

The other specialists in the community are mostly the parties to



similar contracts. Priests serve local sections of communities which have the form of territorially delimited wards or parts of wards. In return the priest obtains the use of dedicated land and certain kinds of yearly tax, in kind. Most landowners have a potter, a tailor, a herder, and a washerman attached to their households on a yearly contract, whereby each is expected to perform all services appropriate to his caste in return for a stipulated weight of grain per year. Apart from such dyadic contractual relations the services of such professional craftsmen are also available to others on a piecework basis. This is true too of the other, rarer, specialists not discussed so far. These sporadic and limited 'piecework' exchanges require money payment and haggling over prices. The only case where goods are paid for in kind as opposed to money is in exchanges between agriculturalists and herders, where the traditional equation of equal volumes of milk for maize holds good.

There is one further field of non-monetary exchange which should be mentioned. This concerns the status position of barbers and the exchange of the goods and services required for the *ries de passage* of every individual. Villagers in Swat mark the birth, circumcision (for boys), betrothal, marriage and death of individuals by fairly large-scale public celebrations. For the purpose of mutual assistance in performing these celebrations they form neighbourhood associations, *latrole*. Each such association is administered by a barber; he holds service contracts with each individual household in the association, whereby he agrees to perform the service appropriate to his caste in return for a stipulated yearly payment and traditional gifts. These services include haircutting (of men by the barber, of women by his wife) and shaving, but they also include the organization of celebrations, the announcement of the event to appropriate outsiders, and the mobilization of the assistance from fellow association members to which each family is entitled. This assistance includes contributions of foodstuffs and cooked foods, firewood and crockery, and help in cooking and serving. The 'low', 'taboo' status of the barber stems from this special role. Because it involves intimate contact with the domestic life of each family, in breach of the usual barriers of prudery and seclusion, the barber's status needs to be clearly segregated from that of other persons in the community.

#### Corporate organization and spatial distribution of castes

While caste is closely identified with occupation, the relation between caste and political organization is more remote. The political organization of the villages of Swat depends on a system of balanced opposition between landowners competing within a feudal framework. Politically, the whole region is insecure and anarchic, and individuals seek security by attaching themselves to powerful chiefs. Such attachments are contractual, and are immediately linked with the individual's house tenancy. A landowner automatically gains administrative authority over the individuals residing on his property; in return, he is responsible for protecting their lives and interests.

The administration of each community is in the hands of public assemblies of landowners. A landowner will act as advocate for all his non-landowning tenants. After a legal decision has been reached in this forum, it is left to the aggrieved party to compensate himself at the expense of his opponents. It is therefore important for every non-landowner to have a powerful landowner as political patron. A good patron is one whose word carries weight in the assembly, and who will thereafter be able to extract restitution on behalf of his political clients.

But the landowner in turn depends for his position on the fact that he controls many followers. Every landlord therefore endeavours to reinforce his authority by binding his followers with additional economic obligations. By making gifts to the occupants of his 'men's house' he seeks to obtain their exclusive allegiance. In awarding house tenancy contracts he tries to restrict the allocation to those who are willing to make other kinds of dependency contract with him at the same time. In the simplest case, the productive teams described above emerge as corporate political groups under the leadership of the landlord. In all cases, the economic bonds of dependence between persons of differentiated status are utilized to increase the authority of the political lord. Through this organization, the community is split up into homologous sections under rival leaders on the basis mainly of house tenancy contracts. Each such section forms a political group which contains within it a number of different mutually dependent statuses having the landowner as common political patron of all.

Such an organization is entirely independent of caste; it further prevents the castes themselves from developing corporate administrative functions in any system like that of the local ar.1 regional caste pan-



chayats of India. In Swat, no form of organization which cuts across the attachment of the clients to their patrons would be tolerated. Thus, with some minor exceptions, which we shall discuss below, the castes of Swat do not form corporate groups. Indeed, it is hardly possible that they should. The productive system which I have described has the necessary implication that the membership of each of the inferior dependent castes is widely dispersed and consists of small pockets of population located in the feudal domains of a large number of different land-owning chieftains. The membership of such a dispersed group has no common interest or estate in terms of which it might be 'corporate'.

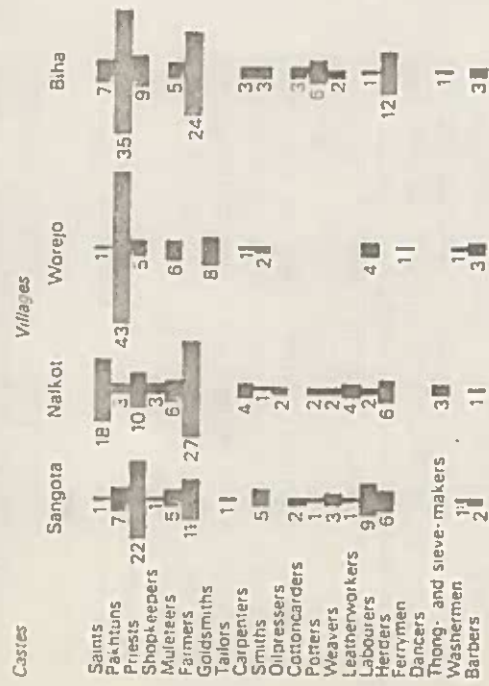


FIGURE 2.3 The caste composition of four Swat villages

In different local communities the proportions of each caste vary. Figure 2.3 shows the caste composition of four particular small villages. The main differences are of two kinds: (a) There is variation in the ratio of Saints to Pakhtuns — some communities are dominated by the former, but most by the latter. (b) There is an inverse variation in the ratio of landowners to tenants. The ratio of total agriculturalists (owners plus labourers) to total craftsmen: to total service castes is roughly constant, though adjusted to the differing labour requirements of different areas. The constancy of these ratios seems to be maintained by migration in response to a free labour market — for it must be remembered that all economic relations are based on voluntary individual

contracts; there is no serfdom. Some specialized castes are found in a few communities only. Ferryman are distributed only among the communities on the banks of the Swat river, butchers are found only in major towns. Where they occur such specialists constitute only a small minority of the population.

To this pattern of distribution there are certain exceptions. In the hilly and mountainous areas of Swat are many small hamlets which do not participate fully in Pathan economic and social life. They are inhabited in part by Gujar pastoralists and farmers ethnically distinct from Pathans, and in part by remnant lineage segments of former landowning groups who were driven off their estates in the main valley during past conflicts. In the feudal framework of Swat, these hamlets correspond to the *coloni* settlements of the Roman marches — they are nominally owned by landowners who reside in the valley bottom and who exact irregular *corvée* labour and military service; but the land is too poor and the area too difficult to control for the landlord to extract regular tax. These hamlets maintain their own political authorities and organization, based on caste and descent, and fall in most respects outside the system discussed here.

The villages of the valley are nearly all multi-caste in composition, and in these the feudal organization is combined with the caste system in a different way. The necessary degree of congruence between the two structures is secured by ascribing feudal ascendancy in any one community to a single high-ranking caste. True corporate structure is then given to this one caste only. This is done by making one caste the sovereign landowners. Thus, in each community, the members of the one dominant caste serve as political patrons to all the members of all other castes. In these circumstances the feudal rights of the landlord may be interpreted, within the caste framework, as merely one further set of rights pertaining to high-caste position. We find that, depending on their relative positions of dominance as landowners, either Pakhtuns or Saints may assume these feudal privileges. In any one community all the individual feudal patrons, being of a single caste, are equal in rank but are ranged in opposition against the feudal patrons of rival neighbouring communities, especially if these are of another caste. In this case the political boundary between territorial ('feudal') domains coincides with the caste boundary between Saint and Pakhtun, so that the political ideology and the caste ideology serve to reinforce each other.

The members of a dominant caste must sometimes join in corporate



action for purposes of government and the defence of their privileges. The land tenure system involves the periodic re-allotment of fields to title-holders over a considerable area, and this presupposes a corporate organization of landowners (Barth, 1957). Although they differ in power according to the number of their clients, all landowners are equal in rank, and the institution which provides a corporate expression of the local dominant caste is simply a plenary assembly of all its members; this assembly simultaneously constitutes the governing body of the whole local community.

The caste unity of the landlord group is not easily maintained. Land is held as individual, private property and can be bought and sold. Since feudal powers go with land, the structure calls for some legal device which will (a) prevent lower-caste individuals acquiring both land and feudal powers, and (b) eliminate those members of the dominant caste who have lost their land and feudal powers.

The former requirement is satisfied by restrictions on the individual's right to alienate land, and by distinguishing between different kinds of title to land. First, close agnates, neighbours and the headman of the ward (administrative division of the village) have first option, in that order, to buy any land offered for sale. Secondly, the transfer of complete title is not permitted across caste boundaries. The vast majority of land is owned by Pakhtuns, who trace descent from patrilineal ancestors who are supposed to have acquired holdings by conquest during the sixteenth century. Such land is classified as *dafīar* and the title-holder has full rights of sovereignty. *Dafīar* title gives the holder the right to speak in the assembly. *Dafīar* land sold to another Pakhtun remains *dafīar*, and the new owner succeeds to the complete rights. If however it is alienated to an individual of another caste, whether Saini or lower caste, it is classified as *sirī* land. The buyer of such land obtains full rights to the land as private, disposable property; but its conversion to *sirī* has divorced it from the administrative framework of the feudal system and removed the right of its owner to speak in the assembly. The exclusive right of members of the Pakhtun caste to serve as patrons is thus maintained in spite of the alienation of full economic rights over part of the original Pakhtun land. A tenant resident on *sirī* lands cannot be the political client of his landlord; he must find some other patron, either through land tenancy contracts with a *dafīar*-owning Pakhtun or by establishing other ties of obligation and service.

Conversely, the Pakhtun who loses all his land loses his caste status.

Since his claim to Pakhtun status can no longer be validated by the possession of *dafīar*, his right to speak in the assembly of landowners is lost, and he must become the client of another man. In spite of his descent, he is then sloughed off from the higher caste and assimilated into the caste of farmer-tenants.

An essentially similar system is enforced in the villages ruled by Sainis — the right to speak in the assembly, and thus to serve as political patron to others, depends on the ownership of land plus membership in the Saini caste.

It should be noted that, while the caste unity of local landowners is essential in both cases, unity of descent is not required. Patrons of different grades of Sainthood, with different ancestors, sometimes rule together within a single village, while, occasionally, villages dominated by Pakhtuns contain non-Yusufzai as well as Yusufzai lineage segments.<sup>3</sup>

The development of trade and the increase in money circulation have largely introduced special factors which are influencing the pattern of caste distribution, and hence the degree to which particular castes are 'corporate'. Most money income in Swat comes from the sources I have mentioned. This money is used to buy a great variety of foreign trade goods. These include foodstuffs such as refined sugar and tea, and industrial products such as crockery, factory-made rifles, cloth, and medicines.

Under the more anarchic political conditions which formerly prevailed, trade caravans required military protection. Each chief provided the defence equipment for the caravans run by his own dependent muleteers. In this way trade remained under the control of the feudal leaders. However, with the improved communications and greater security which developed about the turn of the century, trade became more regular, and trading bazaars grew up in the main communication centres. This bazaar trade has remained predominantly in the hands of former muleteers, now liberated from their dependence on military protectors. Such groups of muleteer traders now tend to congregate in the trading centres.

Within the limits imposed by the shortage of exchange media this same type of trade is also used for internal exchanges between the different local communities. This makes it possible for fellow specialists who are not directly involved in agricultural labour to congregate in a village by themselves where they can maintain themselves by exporting their specialized products to neighbouring villages and buying the



necessities of life from outside. This arrangement is particularly feasible for weavers. Throughout the Swat valley there are to be found occasional villages inhabited almost exclusively by weavers; these form centres for the production of cloth.

Here, then, two kinds of localized caste groups have developed: (a) groups of traders located in communication centres who are independent of agriculture but possess money resources, and (b) small villages of uniform caste serving as centres of specialized production for a monetary market. Both types of localized caste group tend to develop a corporate structure. This takes the form of a ritual association (*taltale*), the general nature of which has already been explained above (p. 28) in connection with the role of barber. In both cases independent action by the localized castes is opposed by the landowners, but the castes are able to maintain the autonomy because of their freedom from dependence on feudal patronage. As individuals the traders are mostly house-tenants of various landowners, but they are able to repudiate their individual obligations of clientage in favour of the organized support of their own local caste group. Traders organized in local groups can be useful to the feudal leaders as providers of capital. Also, the possession of money allows such people to protect their interests with occasional bribes. Weavers, on the other hand, generally congregate on the land of a single, non-resident owner; and being economically independent they can combine to keep the landlord's influence at a minimum, in much the same way as do the Gujar hamlets mentioned above (p. 31).

The communities of traders and weavers both tend to recognize, informally, as local leader and spokesman, a *masher* ('elder' or senior man), but in both cases the web of community relations evoked through joint participation in the feasts of *taltale rites de passage* provides the main mechanism for co-ordinating common caste action. New arrivals, such as traders transferring their business from another village, or weavers settling in a new community, are not expected or compelled to join their fellow caste members in any formal organization. There is no 'guild' and no coercion to accept the authority of a *masher*. Only when the newcomer has established a set of informal or formal social ties with his fellow caste members, and started to participate in their association for *rites de passage*, is he expected to show solidarity with the group and to participate in their efforts at corporate action.

The Pathan combination of feudal and caste organization thus

depends on the maintenance, in the ruling groups only, of an approximate identity between feudal and caste lines of cleavage. Where economic statuses based on trade and a monetary economy are established outside the feudal framework, other inferior castes also tend to develop corporate organizations. It is remarkable that, in this strongly Muslim area, these latter incipient corporate organizations do not take the form of guilds; instead they appear as ceremonial commensal units concerned with the celebration of the *rites de passage* of caste members.

#### Kinship and caste

Caste, in this essay, is analysed not as a set of ritual groups, but as a pattern of social stratification — that is, a conceptual scheme for ordering the individuals of a community, each occupying multiple statuses, in terms of a limited set of hierarchical categories. Caste systems are considered to be characterized by the relatively high degree of congruence that obtains between (a) the various status frameworks found in the community, with their internal hierarchies, and (b) the hierarchy of caste categories. This congruence is achieved by the definition of invariant and imperative constellations of statuses.

In these terms, we first described the set of caste categories in Swat, and showed the close congruence between this system and the occupational framework. Then we analysed the nature of the congruence between the political framework and caste. As a result, certain constellations of statuses became apparent: Pakhtuns are high rank, landowners, and political patrons; persons of Smith caste are lower rank, blacksmiths, and political clients, etc. We have now to analyse the nature of the congruence between the caste categories and the mutual attachment of individuals through ties of kinship. This congruence is produced in all caste systems by making an aspect of kinship the primary vehicle for the transmission of caste positions; by the ascription of caste on the basis of parentage. Where children are ascribed to the caste of their parents and castes are endogamous, all ties of kinship become concentrated within castes, and the lines of kinship cleavage coincide with the boundaries between castes.

Such perfect congruence will be disturbed wherever there is 'social mobility'. There is in fact a considerable amount of such mobility in Swat; but this in part serves to preserve, rather than disturb, the characteristic constellations of statuses defined in the caste hierarchy. The kinds of social mobility of relevance to this material fall under three



headings: (1) true individual mobility, whereby a man changes his caste position during adult life; (2) hypergamy and hypogamy, whereby a woman marries into a caste different from her own, and (3) inter-generational mobility, whereby a child fails to be ascribed the caste position of his parents.

Whereas cases of (1) seem to be very rare in Swat, (2) and (3) are fairly frequent. All three processes deserve explanation and discussion.

### 1 Individual caste mobility

There is an oft-cited popular saying in the Peshawar district, to the effect that 'last year I was a Julaha (weaver); this year I am a Sheikh (disciple); next year if prices rise I shall be a Saiyad' (Ibbetson, 1916: 222). This points to what is undeniably the easiest route for individual caste mobility — that leading to Sainthood. In Peshawar city such mobility implies little more than a change in honorific title, but in Swat the transition involves change of caste, and is much harder to achieve.

The theological basis for the occasional recognition of Sainthood among non-Saints is a folk elaboration of certain Koranic suggestions regarding incarnations. Pathans believe that in every generation a certain number of very sacred persons (such as a *Ghous*, a member of the committee ruling the Heavens) are born among us, to live a pious life without disclosing their identity. Recognizing and paying respect to such persons gives religious merit.

The man who leads a pious life thus receives particular respect; he cannot make any explicit claims to Saintry status, but may in time be granted such status by others. Usually recognition does not come till after his death, and final proof of his sanctity derives from the efficacy of his grave, evaluated in a spirit of empiricism. For example, the sanctity of a minor Saint in one of the areas where I worked was discovered accidentally from the power of his grave. A shepherd boy let his goats graze between the graves; one nanny-goat disrespectfully leapt over this man's grave so that her teat brushed against it. Her udder immediately became inflamed, and the goat died shortly. The villagers realized there was power in the grave; when put further to the test it proved a potent shrine for prayers for the fertility of stock and women. The deceased man was then recognized as a Saint, and his descendants are now treated as members of the Saint caste.

But recognition may also come in the Saint's lifetime, as in the case of the Akhund of Swat, the prominent religious leader of the last

century, who was originally of Tenant caste. A change of residence and a long period of seclusion seem to be invariably required in order to effect such a transition from a lower-caste status to the caste status of Saint.

The following is a summary of the career of the Akhund of Swat. Born west of the Swat river, he first supported himself as a herder; he then moved to the bank of the Indus and there retired to the life of an ascetic for twelve years, attracting pilgrims and disciples, but taking no part in secular life. In the course of this period he was recognized as a Saint. On his return to secular life he made extensive use of the special peace-making privileges of his acquired caste status so as to further his political career. After his period as a recluse he married and had sons, and his descendants are now classified as *Mians* (cf. p. 21). It should be noted that he did not return to his community of origin or re-establish contacts with collateral kin there.

This pattern of *rite de passage* can be duplicated in the careers of many less important 'created' Saints. During their period of ascetic seclusion they are referred to as *Pir*; only when they re-emerge in secular life are they reclassified as belonging to the grade of Sainthood, a position which affects the status of their descendants within the caste.

No other institutionalized pattern of caste mobility is known. Pakhtun caste status depends on descent and land ownership, both of which are unobtainable by outsiders because of the process whereby alienated land is reclassified as *siri* (see above, p. 32). Mobility between different low castes can be achieved by deception only, as when a person who has competence in the occupation of a caste other than his own travels to a distant place where he then pretends to be of that caste. Similarly, loss of caste cannot take place within a man's own lifetime. A man who was born a Pakhtun will remain a Pakhtun, even if he later loses his land, since he can maintain his claim on the pretext that alienation of land was enforced, or temporary. But such a man has no *dafyar* and thus no Pakhtun status to pass on to his sons. Downward mobility thus results from a failure of succession, not from a change in the individual's own adult caste position.

The rules relating to individual social mobility thus serve to maintain the congruence between the framework of discrete castes on the one hand and the web of kinship affiliation on the other. They do this in two ways. Firstly, the possibility for individual upward mobility is blocked. In the one case where such mobility is possible, the mobile individual (would-be Saint) is required to dissociate himself entirely



from his original kin, and the separation of his old and his new status is further marked by an extended intervening period of seclusion and non-participation in secular life in either capacity. Secondly, the possibility of individual downward mobility is blocked by holding over the completion of the process until the next generation.

## 2 *Hypergamy and hypogamy*

The principle of caste endogamy is usually discussed in terms of Hindu concepts of pollution rather than with reference to its structural significance; and in the former framework one is easily driven to purely scholastic explanations of the widespread phenomenon of hypergamy (e.g. Stevenson, 1954: 57). In the present discussion both hypergamy and hypogamy will be treated as special forms of social mobility which have a direct relevance to the degree of congruence which obtains between caste and kinship. Obviously, any marriage across caste lines creates kinship ties between individuals in different castes and such links persist into succeeding generations. A pattern of caste endogamy has the structural effect of preventing the development of such cross-caste kin relationships. In Swat, however, the ban on individual caste mobility for males is not reinforced by any effective check on this form of mobility for females. Although there is a clear tendency towards caste endogamy, the contrary cases are very numerous (40 per cent; see Table 2.1 p. 42).

The importance of separating kinship relationship from intercaste relationship stems from the importance of kinship in the transmission and ascription of statuses and rights. This does not imply that all social relations between castes need to be repudiated. Intimate individual ties across caste lines form an inherent part of any caste system, and are implied in the obvious complementarity of different caste roles. Strong affective ties between members of different castes are perfectly compatible with the smooth functioning of a caste system. Only those intercaste relations which would create ambiguity in the principles of status ascription are incompatible with the structural features of a caste system. It follows logically from this that a pattern of caste endogamy is vital in any system of kinship only where rights and status are transmitted to children from *both* their parents. But in the Pathan case the system of patriarchal family structure and exclusively patrilineal descent serves to make matrilineal and matrilineal kinship irrelevant to status and authority ascription, and thus obviates the need for caste

endogamy. To demonstrate this fully would require considerable documentation of the ethnographic facts relating to Swat Pathan kinship and marriage, some of which can only be sketched here. The main factors to be considered are the form of marriage, descent, and the distribution of authority between kinsmen.

Pathans recognize only one form of marriage; it is made legal by a simple Islamic ceremony; and by this ceremony, and thus alone, the husband obtains full and exclusive rights over the wife. Brideprice payments, often of considerable magnitude, may be necessary to make the father or marriage guardian give his legally required consent to the marriage; but their payment or non-payment in no way affects the nature or extent of the husband's rights over his wife. On marriage, all the legal rights formerly held by the father, as well as exclusive sexual access, are vested in the husband. A married woman cannot administer her own property, she may not enter any contract except with the permission of the husband, the husband has the right to demand obedience, and the right to discipline his wife to secure such obedience. For the protection of her own limited rights, the wife turns not to her father, but to the village headman or *Qazi*. This corresponds very closely to the Hanafi legal code.

Naturally, even though legal ties are severed, a woman's affectual ties with her parents and siblings normally persist after marriage; however, a wife must obtain her husband's permission before visiting her parents, and he has the full right to refuse her such permission and cut her off from all communication with her kin. On the death of her husband a woman's own son becomes her marriage guardian; only if she has no male issue do potestal rights revert to her father or brother. Affines, if they are friendly with each other, participate extensively in each other's associations for *rites de passage*; but when disagreements arise such participation is temporarily or permanently discontinued. There are no occasions when co-operation or even communication between affines is mandatory. This description of the authority relations within a household and of the relations between affines displays a family system which one might characterize as 'strongly patriarchal'. This pattern of authority must be distinguished from the pattern of descent, which relates to the transmission of statuses and not to the distribution of authority. While in the former case our attention centres on affines, in the latter we are concerned with distinctions between patrilineal and matrilineal relatives. Pathans combine a patriarchal family system with exclusive recognition of patrilineal descent. The greater part of



the rights and obligations which define the position of a Pathan in his various spheres of activity are the subject of private contractual agreements, but all those formal positions to which there is hereditary succession are transmitted exclusively in the male line. Membership in a descent group (*khel*) is transmitted from father to son; there is no pattern of matrilineal grafting, and adoption is impossible. Chiefship in feudal states passes, in default of direct male descendants, to agnatic collaterals of the deceased chief, never to a sister's son or daughter's son, and the status of the mother — whether of chiefly birth or low birth — is immaterial. Seniority among brothers, sons of a common father, is determined by relative age, without reference to the seniority of wives, their respective mothers. Virtually all property, movable and immovable, is held by men and inherited patrilineally, without regard for Islamic laws of inheritance. Women may receive gifts and thus have possessions, or the husband may endow his wife on marriage with a special amount of property (*mahr*), but except for items of personal use such property is held by the husband on the wife's behalf and inherited by her sons. These personal possessions of a woman are inherited by Islamic law, sons each taking two shares and daughters each one share. Where a woman has such property of her own, it is transferred to her marital home upon marriage. She retains no rights in her natal home and therefore has no such rights to transmit to her children. There are thus no material interests of any kind which bind persons to their matrilineal relatives. Pathans usually have affectual ties with their mother's brothers and maternal grandparents, but such feelings have developed simply as a result of childhood visiting — subject to the father's control. Senior matrilineal relatives are shown the respect due to them by virtue of their sex and age, neither more nor less.

In sum, marriage alters the affective significance of kinship for the woman herself, but affinal relations do not create ties between households, and matrilineal kinship plays no role in the transmission of status of property, or in the distribution of authority of seniors over juniors. All status and property is held and transmitted by the male line, and all familial authority is exercised by male patrilineal relatives.

This pattern of descent and authority by itself ensures the necessary degree of structural congruence between significant kinship alignments and lines of caste cleavage: caste ascription, like all other hereditary ascription of status, is on the basis of patrilineal descent; the kinship ties of individuals, both with respect to rights and obligations and in

terms of authority relations, are similarly defined on the basis of patrilineal descent alone.

The figures listed in Table 2.1 show a marked tendency towards caste endogamy, but this endogamy does not arise from any need for a precise congruence between the alignment of individuals by kinship and by caste. In the Pathan system, endogamy seems rather to relate to the hierarchical aspects of caste and to the denial of identity between castes. Pathans explicitly state that sister exchange can only take place between equals. It is appropriate for people who are alike and is a good thing as an expression of solidarity. Any kind of kin endogamy, or status endogamy, is thus approved as an overt expression of friendliness, and as a factor creating friendliness by virtue of the intervisiting which is expected to follow. But women may also be given unilaterally to unequals.

As in most of western Asia and India, women are regarded as an appropriate form of tribute from the weak man, who seeks protection, to the strong, who gives it. The value of such hypogamous marriages to the wife-givers springs, not so much from the value of the affinal relation thus established, as from the esteem acquired through giving highly valued 'tribute'. Hypogamous marriages are thus a recognized pattern: in contrast, hypogamy — the giving of a woman downwards, to inferiors — is frowned upon and considered a 'shame' for the woman's family. Claims to relative rank between castes are usually made in precisely such terms — Sainis may say they receive wives from Pakhtuns, but will not give them daughters in return.

One final factor helps to obscure the effect of this explicit rule, namely the adjustable brideprice. Most of the cases of apparently hypogamous marriages which appear in Table 2.1 might, if the matter were argued properly during the marriage negotiation, be represented as marriages between near equals; any reluctance on the bride's family could then be overcome by a higher brideprice offer. Thus, in seventeen of the nineteen cases of marriage between a man of Priest caste and a woman of Pakhtun or Saint caste, the man belonged to a colony of land (*sir*) owning Priests who are established in the village of Sangota. Such men are lower in caste status than their Pakhtun fathers-in-law, yet, for the purposes of argument, they can be classified as 'fellow land-owners'. Generally speaking, brideprice varies in terms of two criteria which are made quite explicit during brideprice negotiations.

1 Where husband and wife are of approximately equal status then the higher the status of the husband the higher the brideprice.



2a Where the situation is one of hypergamy the brideprice due under (1) is cancelled.

2b Where the situation is one of hypogamy the brideprice due under (1) is increased.

Table 2.1 The caste status of living spouses in four villages

Figures from villages of Sangota, Worejo, Nalkot, Biha

Man	Woman	Saint	Pakhtun	Priest	Goldsmith	Muleteer	Shopkeeper	Farmer	Craftsman	Labourer	Herder	'Unclean'
Saint	25	17	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pakhtun	6	90	5	3	7	3	3	42	8	0	10	1
Priest	8	11	29	0	0	0	5	3	29	2	6	1
Goldsmith	2	1	0	9	4	0	0	0	4	13	6	0
Muleteer	0	2	1	1	16	3	4	1	0	0	1	1
Shopkeeper	0	6	7	0	4	4	8	0	10	1	1	1
Farmer	0	2	1	0	4	9	29	2	6	1	1	1
Craftsman	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	13	6	0	0	0
Labourer	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	17	0	0	0
Herder	0	0	2	0	1	2	0	2	1	14	0	0
'Unclean'	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	1	14
Total marriages												476

Marriages endogamous to caste 283 = 60%

Hypergamous marriages 110 = 23%

Hypogamous marriages 83 = 17%

The net result of such manoeuvres is that, as shown in Table 2.1, a substantial proportion of all marriages are cross-caste. Even so the tendency towards caste endogamy is quite explicit. Each caste is commonly regarded as constituting the widest order of kin group (*nasab*), that is to say it is thought of as endogamous.

### 3 Intergenerational caste mobility

In Swat society the rules of marriage do not, as in an orthodox Hindu system, automatically establish a congruence between the frontiers of caste and the frontiers of kin grouping, but, even so, the principle whereby caste membership is inherited by patrilineal descent does require that individual descent groups should be confined to particular

castes. Although this congruence of descent grouping and caste grouping is in fact maintained, a certain amount of intergenerational caste mobility does occur.

Pathans themselves are fully aware of such caste changes, and relate the process to occupational mobility. Thus, if the son of a Priest takes up carpentry, he will always be known as a Priest, likewise his son again. But if a man of the third generation continues as a carpenter and there are no known collateral agnates in other occupations in the village, people may say: 'his father was a carpenter, and so was his grandfather; so he is a carpenter (by caste).' Such a process is entirely consistent with the facts described above: the reclassification is done without reference to matrilineal kin, and is made possible by (a) stability of occupation in the descent line, and (b) absence of collateral agnates in other occupations. The founder of this new 'lineage' of Carpenters — the deceased ancestor who changed his occupation — may well be remembered as having been a Priest, so long as no other agnatic descendants of his are known. Under these particular circumstances, intergenerational mobility (and retroactive reclassification of immediate ancestors) preserves rather than disturbs the characteristic constellation of statuses defined by each caste. A patrilineal descent group such as this is unconnected with other such groups, it occupies the socio-economic position characteristic of carpenters, and thus clearly belongs in the caste category 'Carpenter'.

The depth and span of patrilineal descent groups varies between castes, and to some extent within them. While Saints recognize numerous quite distinct lineages, some large, some small, Pakhtuns in theory, and very nearly in practice, make up a single very large patrilineage. Among Farmers and Herders some ramifying descent groups of six to eight generations' depth are found; these occasionally have an additional pedigree which links them to distant tribes of past conquerors. Carpenters, Potters, and particularly Blacksmiths, though possessing only very shallow genealogies nevertheless have a distinctive pattern of genealogical claims. An important section of these craftsmen claim descent from King David, who, in the manner of a culture hero, forged tools, using his knee as an anvil, and with these tools made a potter's wheel — thereby inventing the techniques of smithing, carpentry, and pottery-making. He taught these arts to his sons and daughter; the latter was taught pottery, but she then married and communicated her skills to her husband and son. All 'true' craftsmen claim descent through one of these siblings from King David, and occasionally claim



that this is what makes them distinct from mere *kasbar* — craft-companions. However, only about one-third of the smiths in Swat seem to claim the distinction of descent from David, and the tradition is without much importance as far as members of other castes are concerned.

The process whereby, as a consequence of change of occupation by an ancestor, a whole patrilineage may 'change its caste' is relevant for the formation of new castes. The framework of occupations itself is not entirely stable — for while no traditional occupations are known to have disappeared, some new ones are definitely known to have arisen. New castes may form around such new occupations through hereditary transmission from father to son; alternatively a new caste may be formed through the splitting of an old one. Both processes may be seen at work today. The introduction of the sewing-machine some seventy years ago has led to the emergence of a new, as yet small and not fully formed, caste of 'Tailors', recruited from a variety of castes in the middle range of the hierarchy. Similarly, the invention, outside of Swat, of a form of sandal which in the course of the last thirty years has become the predominant fashion in men's shoes, has created the new occupation of 'sandal-maker'. A variety of men have adopted this occupation, and my Pathan informants expected that a caste of 'Sandal-makers' would emerge in the course of another generation or two. On the other hand, over the last sixty years improved communications have led to a wide proliferation of shops. Formerly, all such shops were owned by Hindus; but recently there has developed a local Pathan caste of 'Shopkeepers'. Though it has received accretions, particularly from the Priest caste, the main body of this new caste derives from the traditional Muleteer caste, with which it is still sometimes identified. It is a reasonable presumption to expect that within a generation or so 'Shopkeepers' and 'Muleteers' will emerge as completely distinct castes.

To sum up: congruence between the boundaries of caste grouping and the boundaries of kinship obligation is maintained by confining each patrilineal descent group to a particular caste. Where social mobility occurs across caste boundaries various kinds of fission of the patrilineage may result which serve to restructure the kinship system into segregated caste compartments as before. The exclusively patrilineal emphasis among Swat Pathans implies that hereditary succession and the jural allocation of authority in terms of kinship is confined within particular patrilineages. This suffices to ensure consistency

between caste roles and kinship roles. The self-sufficiency of the patrilineal principle accounts for the relaxation of the ordinary caste rule of endogamy. The existence of affinal links which cross caste boundaries has no consequences as regards jural authority over things or persons.

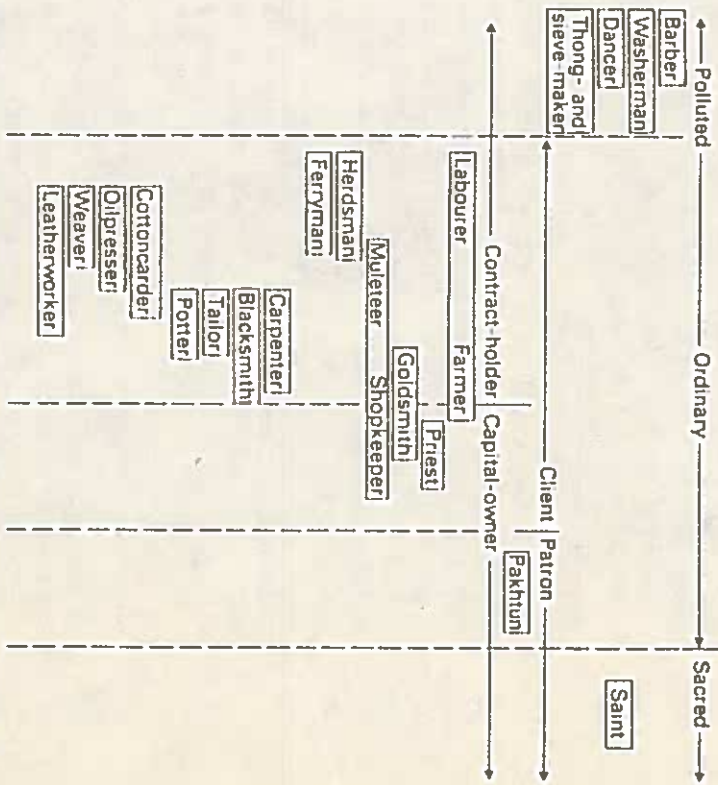


FIGURE 2.4 *The hierarchy of castes in Swat, and some criteria on which it is based*

#### Hierarchical aspects of caste

The main clusters of statuses that characterize each caste position in Swat should now be clear, as well as the types of relation — economic, political, and marital — which exist between castes. But a caste system does not only serve to place individuals in discrete categories; like any system of social stratification it also provides for a hierarchical ordering of these categories into 'higher' and 'lower'. This hierarchical



ordering may be referred to as the *ranking* of castes. The rank order of castes is made explicit in various ceremonial contexts; it may also be elicited by direct questioning of informants. The positions of the castes in the high-low axis in Figure 2.4 summarizes, to the best of my understanding, the numerous explicit and implicit statements I collected on the subject.

These evaluations are made on the basis of such criteria as wealth, skin colour, political power, belief in inherited virtue, etc. In the present section I attempt to isolate these criteria. I must stress that among my informants no single individual was ever willing to produce an exhaustive schema for the ranking of all castes. The problem is thus one of analysis and synthesis.

A distinction may usefully be made between the *criteria* for the ranking of groups, and the *idiom* in which hierarchy is expressed. In a Hindu caste system, it would appear that a single concept underlies both criteria and idiom — namely the concept of ritual pollution. But in Swat the position is less simple. The ranking of castes derives from a whole set of value scales, of which purity/pollution is only one — political power, and wealth, being others. The idioms in which these ranking differences are expressed are on the other hand highly eclectic, and consist mainly of a series of actions expressive of equality or inequality between persons. I shall first discuss the criteria by which the hierarchical ranking of castes in Swat seem to be determined, and secondly the idioms in which hierarchical differences are expressed.

#### Criterion of purity/pollution

In contrast to Hinduism, Islam is an egalitarian religion; and an elaborate hierarchy of ritual rank has no meaning in an Islamic framework. This is not to say that there is no development of a concept of pollution; but, according to Islam, ritual pollution, which derives from body processes such as elimination, sexual intercourse and death, applies equally to all. All men are equally cursed with such sources of pollution, and purity can only be maintained by repeated purificatory acts on the part of the individual. As a ritual system Islam is thus unsuited to produce hierarchical distinctions between social strata. However, this ideal ritual equality does not imply that Moslem societies are without ritually-based systems of social stratification.

In Swat, as in Hindu societies, the notion that pollution derives from body processes marks off certain castes as occupationally polluted.

In the case of Sweepers this pollution is so strong that the profession as such has been rejected by Pathan society. The only Sweepers to be found in Swat are members of a Panjabi caste who have been brought in and protected by prominent chiefs. The indigenous polluted castes include Washermen, Barbers (who are concerned with shaving, nail-paring, and childbirth), and Thong- and Sieve-makers (who work with the guts of animals); these three groups are everywhere despised and form the lowest stratum of society. The case of Dancers also falls in this category, since they are associated with prostitution and other morally bad practices.

These polluted castes constitute only a small percentage of the total population (cf. Fig. 2.3). There is no agreed principle whereby other occupations may be rated as more or less polluting, consequently the majority of the population remains, in this respect, undifferentiated and is of 'normal ritual status'. The concept of pollution produces no further distinctions until we reach the very top of the hierarchy, where a belief in the inherited power and holiness of the descendants of the Prophet Mohammed, or of prominent Saints, serves to set these persons apart from ordinary profane individuals. Such elevated status, however, here requires more strict observance of ritual rules, and not the abandonment characteristics of Indian Sanyasis.

The criterion of purity/pollution thus gives a tripartite ranking of castes in the categories (1) *polluted*, embracing the four lowest castes, (2) *ordinary*, representing the bulk of the castes, and (3) *sacred*, represented by the highest caste, the Saints.

#### Criterion of political power

Political power is highly valued among Pathans; it is associated with independence and regarded as honourable and good, whereas weakness and dependence is shameful and bad. The important distinction for purposes of ranking is between *patrons* and *clients*; patrons include all Pakhtuns and Saints, clients all others. However, since Pakhtuns are politically more powerful than Saints, this introduces some ambivalence in their ranking vis-à-vis Saints, an ambivalence not unfamiliar elsewhere in India.

Politically powerful Pakhtuns can denigrate the sacred status of Saints and claim rank equality with them; Saints on the other hand are adamant in their claim that all Saints *ipso facto* rank higher than all Pakhtuns. On this issue the Saints have the support of the non-Pakhtun population.



As noted above (p. 29), the political authority of patrons over their clients depends to a considerable extent on economic control. The criterion of political power thus produces a further distinction: between (a) castes whose members are economically free, and (b) castes whose members depend on their political patrons for economic contracts. The politically more autonomous castes include the Priests, who farm or administer dedicated lands, some Farmers, who themselves own a bit of land, Goldsmiths, who have their own capital and engage on piecework only, and Shopkeepers, who do independent business on a cash or barter basis. Economic contract-holders, on the other hand, whether tenants, labourers or craftsmen, are subject to economic sanctions from their patrons. They are weaker and more dependent, and thus rank lower.

#### Criterion of wealth

Ranking on the basis of wealth differences tends throughout to be congruent with the ranking on the basis of pollution and political power, with two exceptions. Dancers may accumulate a fair amount of wealth, particularly in the form of pretty clothes, even though they belong in the lowest, polluted, group; on the other hand Saints cannot compete with Pakhtuns in wealth even though they claim the highest 'ritual' status. In both these cases, the criterion of purity/pollution dominates over that of wealth, so far as general ranking evaluations are concerned.

In all other respects the criterion of wealth serves to reinforce the ranking based on other criteria. In some cases it serves to intensify the differentiation between castes. Thus labourers, herdsman, and ferrymen are all economically depressed castes, and as such they rank lower than the other craft and service castes, even though they stand higher than all the polluted groups.

The relative hierarchical positions of the castes of Swat are thus consistent with, and seem to derive from, the three widely held value criteria of purity/pollution, political power, and wealth. Each of these criteria produces one or several dichotomies, placing groups of castes in positions of inequality. In combination, these three criteria produce all the apparent rank distinctions except one, namely that between high- and low-status craftsmen: that is to say between (a) carpenter, smith, tailor and potter, who are high, and (b) cotton-carder, oil presser, weaver and leatherworker, who are low. This distinction is quite clearly recognized by Swat Pathans. Whereas car-

penry, smithing, etc. are regarded as perfectly respectable occupations, weaving, oil-pressing, etc. are not respectable, and the castes associated with these latter occupations may be referred to by others as 'low' and 'unclean'. The nature of the value criterion on which this ranking is based is obscure. A similar ranking is found in North India, where it is said to be justified in terms of the Hindu pollution concept (Stevenson, 1954: 61, but see comment by Mayer, 1956: 128 n.). Such arguments appear to be meaningless in terms of the ideas of Swat Pathans, but we may be dealing here with a direct case of cultural diffusion from India. The castes of Swat correspond to, and their members communicate with, those of the North Indian plain; and general 'snob' attitudes current in India may have been adopted in Swat without reference to the philosophic values underlying them. In all other respects, however, the ranking of castes in Swat may be seen to reflect basic values which are prevalent in Swat itself.

#### Hierarchical compatibility of part-statuses

I have shown above how the caste system of Swat is characterized by the principle of status clustering — groups of compatible part-statuses are associated together and thus form a single stereotyped social person characteristic for each caste. The members of the caste are then made to conform to this stereotype. As pointed out above (p. 17), this matter has two aspects:

1 Compatible statuses must imply roles that may be simultaneously satisfied by one individual.

2 In a structural sense compatible statuses must define positions that are congruent with one another. While in most of this essay I have emphasized the former aspect, I am here concerned with the latter. I seek to discover possible structural principles that govern the association of statuses in clusters.

Clearly we are concerned with rank. To be compatible, part-statuses must imply similar relative positions in the general scale of superordination/subordination. Thus a man cannot simultaneously be an economic contractholder and a political patron, since in one capacity he would rank low while in the other capacity he would rank high and be expected to exercise authority over his (economic) superiors. While such incongruities are possible in a society where the different offices and capacities of a single individual are distinguished, they are disruptive to a system where these are *not* clearly distinguished, and where



individuals have intimate, face-to-face relations with each other in many different spheres of activity. Differentiation in such societies can only be maintained if individuals in their different capacities are ranked consistently. This is precisely what is achieved in a caste system by limiting the permitted combinations of part-statuses to a restricted number of constellations.

Pathans in Swat express the notion of compatibility and incompatibility of statuses in terms of a concept of shame (*sharm*). A man is 'ashamed' to assume any position or perform any action which he feels is incompatible with his caste status. Considerations of shame and its avoidance are very frequent and prominent in conversations and deliberations in Swat. In fact the concept applies in a number of different situations: it is brought into play whenever an individual's actions deviate from the norm of what is expected of him; it thus also relates to activities such as hospitality, blood feud, etc. In its relevance to caste, shame expresses precisely the notion of hierarchical incompatibility of statuses and roles, and applies equally to up- and down-grading: for example, a Carpenter refuses, from shame, to perform a polluting service like washing clothes for another, while feelings of shame similarly prevent him from trying to exercise authority over a caste superior, such as a Pakhtun or a Saint who is in debt to him. The use of this shame concept by Pathans corresponds to the use of the pollution concept among Hindus. Shame directs the choices made by individuals in assuming new part-statuses. The caste organization depends for its maintenance on the explicit recognition of this discriminating factor.

#### Hierarchical idioms

In Swat hierarchical differences are continually being expressed in ceremonial behaviour; but the idioms in which they are expressed are not developed into any coherent system like that of Hindu ritual. Such idioms mostly concern the relative status of pairs of actors, rather than of whole caste groups. A brief description of these idioms will help to give a fuller picture of the social implications of caste in Swat.

Economic prosperity correlates highly with caste rank, and since affluence is readily visible in dress, the style of clothing (quality, number and size of garments, cleanness, weapons carried, etc.) is used as a rough sign of caste. Only Saints, however, stand out clearly by their use of white cloth, particularly in the use of white turbans.

Saints are also marked off as a category by special deference behaviour: when any member of the saint caste enters a room, all those present rise — a sign of respect which is also shown to prominent chiefs as individuals, but not to any other whole caste group. Hierarchy is also constantly expressed in terms of address. The kinship terms *Baba* (GrFa), *Kaka* (FaBr), *Wora* (Br) and *Haleka* (Boy/Son) are often used vocatively in a metaphorical sense, the choice of term reflecting relative status rather than age. Thus all adult males of the Saint caste are addressed as *Baba* by all others, while persons of low caste extend this term also to senior Pakhtuns and Priests. An adolescent Pakhtun, on the other hand, freely uses the term *Haleka* to older men of lower caste: for example, to craftsmen. But the most important hierarchical idioms derive from the two fundamental situations of gift-giving and commensality.

We have here to distinguish between gifts = charity, and gifts = tribute. Some kinds of goods are used in both contexts, and an observer needs to have previous knowledge of the relative statuses of the two actors to understand the meaning in each case. Thus a gift of fruits is an appropriate sign of deference, but also, inversely, it is a sign of benevolence. Other goods may be used only, or primarily, in one context. Thus gifts of money are frequently made, but only from a superior to an inferior; they are often described by the Arabic (Muslim) word for alms. Snuff, on the other hand (used by most adult males), is offered only to equals and superiors, and not to persons of inferior status.

Large feasts with multi-caste participation — which occur very frequently in Pathan men's houses — are the most characteristic setting for the expression of rank. Cooked food may appropriately be given not only to equals but also to inferiors. Hence, if a person of superior rank eats the cooked food of an inferior, he honours the latter by implying a rough equality between the two. This relates to the fact that the giving of food, particularly in the form of a meal, implies an obligation on the part of the host to protect his guest in a political sense. The host is the (political) superior of the guest. The superiority is temporary in the case of a visitor, but of indefinite duration when the recipient is a local person. Crucial political ties between allies, and between leaders and followers, are thus expressed in the joint participation in a feast.

In contrast, actual commensality, at close quarters, implies an approximate equality of rank. A feast can thus provide opportunity



for the expression of a fairly complex set of relative differences and equalities. Feasting usually takes the following form: political unity, which cuts across caste boundaries, is asserted overall, but with an authority differentiation marking the host as leader and the guests as allies and dependants. The guests divide into three degrees — high-rank, commoner, and low-rank individuals; these group themselves in concentric circles, with the persons of high rank in the centre. Meals are generally served on trays each with a feeding capacity of four to eight. Several individuals of equal status seat themselves around one tray. Alternatively the three degrees of rank may be served with food in succession. Saints and Priests are sometimes isolated in one corner of the men's house and fed separately. Women never participate in such feasts; even in the home, the two sexes eat separately, particularly among the higher castes.

### Conclusion

As has now been shown, the system of social stratification in Swat is a system of clearly delimited, named positions, into one or another of which all members of the community fall. The series of such positions is hierarchically ordered, and is differentiated with respect to functions and relative access to coveted goods. Each position is characterized by a cluster of statuses relevant in different sectors of life and frameworks of organization. Thus, for example, a *Pakhtun* is a wealthy man of the *Yusufzai descent group*, a *landowner* and a *political patron*, while a *Smith* is a man of *moderate means*, a *putative descendant of David*, *blacksmith* by profession, and a *political client*.

In other words, despite the highly complex system of differentiated statuses and division of labour within the society all members may be placed in one or another of a limited set of positions. This is possible because the incumbency of one status also necessarily implies incumbency of a series of other statuses forming the cluster characterizing that 'caste position'. By Nadel's definition, the system is highly *involute*, though this term was developed by him mainly to characterize homogeneous societies (Nadel, 1957: 67-72).

The principle of status summation seems to be the structural feature which most clearly characterizes caste as a system of social stratification. It is mainly for this reason that I have referred to the system of hierarchical positions in Swat as a caste system. I am aware that I thereby give the word a wider application than may suit many students of

Indian caste systems. However, if the concept of caste is to be useful in sociological analysis, its definition must be based on structural criteria, and not on particular features of the Hindu philosophical scheme. In this sociologically more fundamental sense, the concept of caste may be useful in the analysis of non-Indian societies.

In much of the Middle East, 'plural' societies are found, characterized by clear lines of internal segmentation, often based on ethnic criteria; such societies have a structure characterized by the summation of statuses in an involute system, in which a high degree of status differentiation is associated with a limited set of permitted status combinations. Such systems depend for their persistence on very clear criteria for status ascription. In societies other than those of extreme patriarchy, this prerequisite implies a pattern of endogamy within the stratified groups — a feature often emphasized in the definition of caste. An analysis of such societies along the lines suggested here might make it possible to isolate other such prerequisites or correlates of caste.

The necessity for status summation in standardized clusters or positions, and the rigid differentiation of such positions in Swat, has been shown to be functionally related to the requirements of an elaborate system of division of labour in an essentially non-monetary economy (cf. p. 23). I would put forward the following general typology under which the features discussed here might be subsumed:

There are (1) truly homogeneous societies, in which internal differentiation is weak. Almost unlimited social substitution is possible within sex and/or age categories. Increasing status differentiation impairs this substitutability unless (2) clusters of statuses are defined. In that case the possibility of substitution remains, but only within a limited set of hierarchical categories ('castes') which are interdependent and together compose the community. Considerable complexity is possible in such a system without the development of any bureaucratic form of organization.

Finally there are (3) complex systems in which different statuses can be freely combined. Here the different capacities of the different statuses are clearly distinguished. This type of system is found associated with the use of a monetary medium which facilitates the division of labour.



## Notes

- 1 The author did fieldwork in the Swat valley during nine months of 1954. Other aspects of the material have been discussed in Barth (1956) and Barth (1957).
- 2 The Malakand Agency was established by a British military expedition in 1895. The territories held by Dir were conquered by that state in the first years of this century. Swat state was founded in 1917 and recognized by British India in 1927. The changes in social organization wrought by the weak and unstable centralized governments of Dir and Swat have so far been limited, while the villages of Malakand agency have complete local autonomy.
- 3 No account is taken here of possible consequences of Pakistani plans to create elected bodies based on universal suffrage. Any such organization, if successful, would clearly prove fatal to the structure I have described.

### 3 Segmentary opposition and the Theory of Games: A study of Pathan organization

The present essay relates to the extensive discussion in the anthropological literature on the role of unilineal descent groups in politics, i.e. the theory of lineage systems (cf. Fortes, 1953). It is, however, concerned with the analysis of a divergent case: a political system in which ramifying patrilineal descent is of prominent importance in politics, yet where larger lineage groups do *not* emerge as corporate units.<sup>1</sup>

The case analysed is the acephalous political system of the Yusufzai Pathans of the North-west Frontier Province, Pakistan. To elucidate this case, it will be necessary to present considerable detail on their organization. This consists of field material, collected in the course of the year 1954. Further material has been, and will be, published elsewhere (Barth, 1956; Mss). In the analysis of this data, I shall utilize some of the elementary concepts and procedures of the Theory of Games (cf. Neumann and Morgenstern, 1947; Stone, 1948), as well as the relevant anthropological theory relating to descent groups and corporate groups.

The argument of the essay depends on a distinction between the purely structural arrangement of units defined by a unilineal descent charter, and the manner in which these units are made relevant in corporate action. In the description of lineage systems in the literature, this distinction is not often made. The analysis of the solidarity of unilineal descent groups usually relies on a Durkheimian conception of mechanical solidarity. In such a framework, solidarity derives from likeness. The descent charter defines a hierarchy of homologous groups, and thus directs the fusion of political interests within a merging series of such groups.

This *particular* expression of the descent group charter has been

\* First published in *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 89, Pt. 1: 5-22.